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# THE NATURE OF RELIGION

# THE NATURE OF RELIGION

## GIFFORD LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
IN THE YEARS 1924 AND 1925

BY

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HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LIMITED LONDON

Made and Printed in Great Britain
T. and A. Constable Ltd., Printers, Edinburgh

BL51.F3

TO MY WIFE



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# PREFACE

THE substance of this book is the series of Gifford Lectures which were given in the Spring Term of 1924 in the University of Glasgow. In preparing the lectures for publication I have been glad of the opportunity of revising and expanding them. I have also thought it desirable to include the opening lectures of the second series which gather up the results of the inquiry into the Nature of Religion, and outline an argument in vindication of the Truth of Religion.

I am indebted to Dr. John Morrison for assistance in correcting the proofs, and to my daughter Elizabeth for the compilation of the index.

W. P. PATERSON.

EDINBURGH, *9th Oct.* 1925.

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Aim of the Gifford Lectureship | 1 |
| Range of the Discussions | 9 |
| The Method of Philosophical Theism | 14 |
| The Method of the Philosophy of Religion | 19 |
| Characteristics of Religion | 23 |


## CHAPTER II

### THE TYPES OF THE RELIGIOUS SUBJECT


| | |
|---|---|
| Psychology of Religion Old and New | 32 |
| The Individual Subjects— | |
| 1. Man as Man | 38 |
| 2. The Convert | 42 |
| 3. The Saint | 52 |
| The Collective Subjects— | |
| 1. The Natural Community | 65 |
| 2. The Ecclesiastical Community | 68 |
| Comparison and Valuation of the Subjects | 69 |


## CHAPTER III

### RELIGION AND THE INSTINCTS


| | |
|---|---|
| The Nature of Instinct | 74 |
| Religion and Self-Affirmation | 80 |
| Religion and Self-Subjection | 88 |
| Religion and Tender Emotion | 91 |
| Religion and Curiosity | 95 |
| Pugnacity and Gregariousness | 97 |
| The Specific Religious Instinct | 98 |
| Metaphysical Implications | 104 |

## CHAPTER IV

### RELIGION AND THE SUBCONSCIOUS

PAGE

Definition of the Terms . . . . . 111
Departments of the Subconscious . . . . . 113
The Rôle of the Subconscious . . . . . 122
Interpretation of the Phenomena—
1. Immanent Theories . . . . . 130
2. Transcendent Theories . . . . . 137
Justification of the Theological Interpretation . . . 140

## CHAPTER V

### THE RELIGIOUS MIND

Activity of the Mind in Religion . . . . . 148
The Recognised Powers—
1. Intellection . . . . . 152
2. Imagination . . . . . 163
Additional Elements . . . . . 167
Extraordinary Intellectual Experiences—
1. Modes of Manifestation . . . . . 175
2. Modes of Control . . . . . 178
Intuitive Thinking . . . . . 184
Intellectual Dignity of the Results . . . . . 186

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHIEF END OF RELIGION

Its Practical Purpose . . . . . 190
Different Conceptions of the Nature of the Salvation—
1. The Mundane Theory . . . . . 195
2. The Fugitive Theory . . . . . 199
3. The Plenary Theory . . . . . 207
Strictures on the Salvation-type of Religion considered . . 221

## CHAPTER VII

### RELIGION AS DUTY TO GOD

Appeal of Religion to the Moral Sense . . . . 228
The Mixed Form of Obligational Religion . . . 232
The Pure Form . . . . . 248
Valuation of the Two Forms . . . . . 255

## CHAPTER VIII

### RELIGION AS LOVE OF GOD

PAGE
Interpretation of Religion as Feeling . . . . . 261
Analysis of Love . . . . . 264
Divine Love at the Natural Level . . . . . 269
Divine Love at the Regenerate Level . . . . . 274
Divine Love at the Saintly Level . . . . . 282
Types of Divine Love . . . . . 285
Valuation of the Emotional Type of Religion . . . 297

## CHAPTER IX

### RELIGION AS LIGHT

The Theoretical Interpretation . . . . . 304
Its Partial Justification . . . . . 308
Esteem of Knowledge as a Means of Salvation . . . 309
Esteem of Knowledge as an Independent Good . . . 318
The Cycle of Appreciation, Exaggeration and Depreciation . 331

## CHAPTER X

### MAN'S VISIONS OF GOD

Variety of the Ideas of God . . . . . 337
Classification of the Ideas . . . . . 341
1. The Realistic Series . . . . . 343
2. The Dynamistic Series . . . . . 350
3. The Pneumatistic Series . . . . . 359
4. The Agnostic Doctrine . . . . . 368
Application of the Religious Criteria . . . . 370
Pre-eminence of Theism . . . . . 377

## CHAPTER XI

### THE WAY OF SALVATION

Importance of the Subject . . . . . 382
Magician, Priest, Prophet, Sage . . . . . 383
The Ascending Series of Methods—
1. The Way of Coercion . . . . . 383
2. The Way of Ingratiation . . . . . 393
3. The Way of Obedience . . . . . 396
4. The Way of Faith . . . . . 406
The Bearing of Faith on Morals . . . . . 413
Its Bearing on Sacramental Rites . . . . . 419

## CHAPTER XII

### THE PROBLEM OF ORIGINS

PAGE

Interest in the Subject . . . . . 427
Originating Cause and Primitive Form . . . . 428
Theological and Evolutionary Views . . . . 428
Factors and Laws of Development—
1. Traditional View of Religious History . . . 439
2. Tiele's Evolutionary Scheme . . . . 441
3. St. Paul's Interpretation . . . . . 449
Modern Prepossessions . . . . . 454

## CHAPTER XIII

### CONCERNING THE TRUTH OF RELIGION

Bearing of the Nature of Religion on the Question of Truth . 457
Results of the present Inquiry . . . . . 458
The Chaos of Religious History . . . . . 458
The Unity of Religious History . . . . . 460
The Goal . . . . . 463
Truth of Religion Defined . . . . . 472
Cumulative Argument in support of the Truth of Religion . 473

INDEX . . . . . 503

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTORY

In the Laws of Manu it is enjoined on the Brahman that when his hair is white, and his skin is wrinkled, and he has looked on his son's sons, he shall turn his back on his home and his secular avocations, and, withdrawing to the forest, devote the remainder of his days to meditation on the nature of the Infinite Being, and to the consummation of his deliverance by absorption in God.[1] In the West there has not been the same sense of the sacred vocation of old age, and it has even come to be the common opinion that the man is wisest who goes on with his accustomed work as if he were destined to live for ever, and happiest who is surprised by death when engrossed in his worldly concerns. It is, notwithstanding, a tenable view that nothing better beseems an old man than that he should become philosophical according to his capacity, reflect on the meaning of the dramatic experience which has been vouchsafed him as a denizen of this planet, and endeavour to clarify, amend, or enrich his ideas about the nature and the author of the scheme of things of which his life has been an interesting though infinitesimal part. In order to further this inclination, Lord Gifford framed a Deed which has in view those who roughly correspond to the Brahman caste, and who usually are in the third or even the fourth stage of their pilgrimage, and which provides for an invitation to contemplate the world

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, 1886, vol. xxv. chap. vi.

in which they have done their work from the standpoint of eternity, and declare what they have come to know, or to know that they do not know, concerning 'the Infinite, the First Cause, the one and only Substance.' But again we are reminded that the West is not the East, as we compare the provisions of the Laws of Manu with those of the Gifford Foundation; for, firstly, the oriental rule imposed upon the sage the duty of 'wandering about absolutely silent,' while the Gifford rule is that he shall deliver a series of at least twenty 'public and popular lectures,' and secondly, while the Brahman was called on to renounce everything, 'living without a fire, without a house, subsisting on roots and fruit,' Lord Gifford attached to his lectureship a very handsome endowment. In one of these particulars, it may be thought, the Eastern regulation is on the higher plane, as it makes the plausible assumption that meditation on the greatest themes is likely to be marked by deeper insight when carried on in the spirit of utter self-abnegation in which money is rated as dross, and honour is no more coveted than wealth. On the other hand, if something was gained, much must have been lost to India by the prescription of silence, which implied that the wisdom of the sage would perish with him; and it is a service of the Gifford Trust that it has insisted that some should declare their mind whom their generation eagerly desired to hear on the great questions, but who might otherwise have passed from them with sealed lips, and that it has elicited out of their wisdom, in compensation for many words that have been spoken to little purpose, some things that will remain a possession for ever.

It is, in truth, a momentous debate which, on the initiative of a senator of the College of Justice, has

been proceeding in Scotland during the last thirty years ; for it has served, not merely as a revelation of the inner mind of our time in its wrestlings with the fundamental problems of existence, but also as a many-sided discussion of the central religious doctrine which combines the maximum of speculative interest with the most far-reaching practical consequences. There was a fitness in the choice of Scotland as the arena of the discussion, since it had itself produced classic examples of the chief types of mind that have left their mark on theistic thought. The extreme right was represented by John Knox, arch-dogmatist, of the succession of the Hebrew prophets, who on the ground of his religious experiences, the inner witness of his spirit, and a sense of the providential ordering of events, was as sure of God and of His eternal purposes as he was of himself and of his reforming policy ; and on the extreme left was David Hume, arch-sceptic, as little sure of God as of the substantial existence of his own soul, the most acute and ruthless of the critics of the defences which man has thrown up around the citadel of his religious faith, to whose influence more than any other it was due, not only that Philosophy was forced to re-examine its foundations, but that the creed of many who have only heard echoes and catch-words of the collisions of metaphysical speculation has shrunk to a ' perhaps ' and a ' perhaps not.' The third typical figure was Thomas Reid, of the Chairs of Logic and Moral Philosophy, who in addition to his personal interest in the religious issue had the professional duty of surveying and pronouncing on the developments of modern Philosophy, and also the responsibility of aiding in the formation of the principles and the character of the academic youth. In addition there has been a goodly audience drawn from

all classes for which nothing was too deep in Theology or Philosophy.

The Scottish Church took a large share in the intellectual travail which was caused by the re-opening of the debate on Theism. It was in fact the Church, as represented by the distinguished figures of Chalmers, Tulloch, John Caird, and Flint,[1] which down to the end of last century made the most important contributions, constructive as well as polemical, to the theistic discussion. They had been frankly warned off the philosophical ground in the passage in Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, in which Cleanthes observes that Theology has elected to ally itself now with a positive, now with a critical and sceptical metaphysic, and Philo draws the moral that this varying attitude had its explanation in the changing exigencies of priestcraft. 'Sceptics in one age,' says Philo, 'dogmatists in another, whichever best suits the purposes of those reverend gentlemen in giving them an ascendant over mankind, they are sure to make it their favourite principle and established tenet.'[2] On the initial question of historical fact it was a hasty and inaccurate generalisation that the theologians were agreed to decry and discredit reason in the illiterate centuries, and that in the modern age of enlightenment they have covenanted to seek its help and patronage. In every epoch there have been theologians who have distrusted reason and who, so far as they philosophised, have proposed 'to erect religious faith on philosophical scepticism.' Their general position was that the human intellect, in view of its inherent weakness,

[1] Chalmers, *Natural Theology*, *Works*, 1838-42, vol. ii.; Tulloch, *Theism*, 1855; Caird, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, 1880; Flint, *Theism*, 1877, *Anti-Theistic Theories*, 1879, *Agnosticism*, 1903.

[2] *Treatise of Human Nature, etc.* (Ed. Green and Grose), 1898, ii. p. 389.

and especially of its enfeeblement and obscuration by sin, is unable to penetrate to the ultimate truth of things, and this tenet necessarily involved a measure of philosophic doubt which was often professed in very unqualified terms. Tertullian of the Fathers, and Luther among the Reformers, used strong language about the imbecility of reason. Some of the later Scholastics sheltered radical doubts and denials under the formula that what was true in Theology could be false in Philosophy. In modern times the attitude was reproduced by Dean Mansel in the Bampton Lectures on *The Limits of Religious Thought*, which made it appear that, in the absence of Christianity, Agnosticism would have been the reasonable creed; while the Ritschlian School, whose contemptuous treatment of Natural Theology is one of its constant marks, must be held to be committed to the view that the light of nature only serves to discover to man that God is unknown and unknowable.[1] But in every epoch also there have been theologians for whom reason was the candle of the Lord. In fact, the normal view has been that there is a general revelation in nature and history which reason is competent to grasp, and from which it has been able to extract the essential truths concerning God, the self, and the world, as well as the chief heads of duty. This was the standpoint of the Greek Fathers

[1] Hume cites Pierre Huet as a learned Roman prelate who 'reproduced all the cavils of the boldest and most determined Pyrrhonism.' In the *Demonstratio Evangelica*, 1679, Huet observes that there are two avenues of knowledge—one, sense and reason, the other, faith, and that the way of reason is obscure, doubtful and unsafe, being blocked by infinite philosophical rubbish. But to say that a road was difficult and dangerous was not to say that it led nowhere. The *Censura Philosophiae Cartesianae*, 1690, does not justify Hume's extreme language. Huet's main charge against Descartes was, not that he had confidence in reason, but that he reasoned badly.

and of the great Scholastics, and it has received the imprimatur of the Roman Catholic Church. It has equally been distinctive of the Reformed branch of the Protestant Church that, in contrast with the wavering attitude of the Lutheran schools, it has held that the light of nature guarantees a knowledge of the fundamental truths of religion and morality. And it is this attitude which—apart from an early divagation of Chalmers—was reproduced by the Scottish theologians of last century. In support of the position Calvin had given the grim reason that it must be possible to attain some knowledge of God and His laws unless sinners were to be left with some excuse for their guilt; while his successors have rather urged that if there be no way of establishing the existence of God as a truth of reason, it must be difficult, if not impossible, to authenticate the claims of a special revelation. As a fact, it is not natural, and may even be thought a psychological anomaly, that the same mind should be able to oscillate between the doubts of the sceptical philosopher and the childlike trustfulness of the humble believer. There is also a palpable incongruity in saying—to use a formula which has been current in Germany—'If I were not a Christian I should be an atheist.' To say that in the strength of my Christian faith I believe that there is a God, almighty, all-wise, and all-good, the Creator and the Governor of the world, and to go on to declare that nothing of these truths—but rather contrary errors—can be collected from an examination of the arrangements of the universe, the constitution of man, and the course of history, seems to be to pay to God the poor compliment of likening Him to one of His earthly children who should be told that he had a lofty genius which unfortunately his writings did not

reveal, or a noble character which was belied by all the details of his conduct.

What is to be said of the paradoxical fact that a strain of philosophical free-thinking is traceable throughout the history of Christian Theology? It was certainly not due to priestcraft. The ingenious Philo, if arguing in another connection, and with another adversary, would surely have delighted to point a different moral. He would have begun by observing that the theologians had embarked on a very natural investigation when, in the Scholastic period, they raised the question as to what measure of truth man would have attained if he had been left to the unaided exercise of his natural powers. He would have gone on to argue that in conducting the discussion on this hypothetical footing the Schools of Divinity had compassed an intellectual freedom which left little to be desired. It was these divines, notwithstanding their bondage to Creed and Confession, and not the philosophers with their vaunted liberty of thought, who down to modern times had been able to undertake the most candid examination of the rational arguments for the existence of God and the doctrine of immortality. For while the theologian, believing that he possessed in revelation an additional source of knowledge which was clear and trustworthy, was not afraid to yield to logic when the rational case broke down, the philosopher, Locke for example, was tempted to manipulate the evidence and palm off bad arguments on himself and others—being in the plight that if his reason drove him to scepticism there was nothing on which he could fall back to save his name from obloquy, and his soul from the desolating negations. The Church, besides, by granting a permit for fearless free-thinking on philosophical lines, had made

a useful provision against the world being overawed by the authority of the philosophical masters, and infected by the credulity of their disciples.

The interest of Scottish Philosophy in Theism was quickened, now by continental influences, now by the revelations made by the Science of the nineteenth century, and by the revolutions which were threatened in its name. And in each generation it was the badge of the school as a whole that it followed Reid in offering a reasoned justification of the fundamental convictions which are common property, and in particular that it took under its protection the fundamental article of the religious creed. It is true that there was no sustained agreement as to the rational grounds of faith in God, nor, it may be added, had the arguments of the Scottish School any marked originality. The contention of Reid that the existence of God is a principle of common sense was a modification of the doctrine of the innate idea; the supplementary reasoning of Dugald Stewart and Brown from the frame of nature was a reproduction of the cosmological and teleological arguments; Ferrier followed Berkeley in maintaining that the theory of knowing implies an infinite mind which gives its reality to the universe, and rescues finite things from the incredible fate of ceasing to exist on ceasing to be perceived; Hamilton reproduced the practical faith along with the theoretical Agnosticism of Kant; Campbell Fraser leaned on Jacobi as well as on Berkeley; and Calderwood reaffirmed the position that the reality of the divine existence is a truth so plain that it needs no proof. Edward Caird gave new life, light, and persuasiveness to the Hegelian doctrine of the Infinite Spirit; Sir Henry Jones preached the love of God as the sum of all the theologies that

could be justified to an inquiring faith; and Professor W. L. Davidson was an early exponent of the argument from human needs to the divine Provider. A reaction was represented by the Positivism of Bain, and also by the unsympathetic detachment of Adamson, as illustrated in his discussion of the theological elements of the systems of Descartes, Leibniz, and Berkeley.[1] It may, however, be said that, throughout a century of unexampled storm and stress, there was in Scotland a *consensus sapientium* which gave a considered judgment in support of the rationality of the religious idea which from of old had been the unquestioned presupposition of the higher life of the Scottish people, and the inspiration of the most notable passages of its history.

The positive and constructive attitude has also been generally characteristic of the company of thinkers, representing many lands and the most diverse intellectual interests, who, on the footing that they might be ' of any religion or of none,' were summoned into council by the Gifford Trustees. It may be thought that there were some Gifford Lecturers who, like Simonides, found that the longer they meditated on the great question that had been proposed to them, the more obscure did it become; but that, unlike Simonides, who solved the difficulty in the end by begging to be relieved of his task, they evaded it by going on to discourse of other topics on which their opinion had not been expected. In general, however, it can be said that, even when they made no attempt to contribute to theological thought, the majority of the lecturers at least contributed materials that fall to be considered, interpreted, and utilised in any comprehensive system of Natural Theology. In an

[1] *The Development of Modern Philosophy*, 1903.

informing and judicious survey of the Gifford literature Professor Davidson has brought out the very wide range of the discussions, classified the books in accordance with their special subject-matter or aim, and expounded and examined the contributions of leading representatives of the principal types of Religious Philosophy. Premising that living thought cannot be strictly confined in compartments, he classifies the literature according to the following table :

*A*. Origin of the idea of God, and the growth of religious beliefs.
*B*. Philosophical development of religion.
    1. Rationality of religion.
    2. Religious philosophy among ancient peoples.
*C*. Philosophy and ultimate reality.
*D*. Philosophy and Theism.
    1. With Theism as general theme.
    2. Special aspects of Theism.
    3. Theism and Science.[1]

Those who have dealt with the fundamental issues have been in general agreement in maintaining the spiritual or idealistic standpoint. The claims of Materialism have scarcely been thought to merit the compliment of a refutation. Naturalism and Agnosticism, though it had been proclaimed from the housetops that they were the culmination of the wisdom of this world, have so far found no advocate to attempt a reply to the trenchant indictment of Dr. James Ward. Dr. Lloyd Morgan, it is true, makes a profession of Naturalism, but it is very materially qualified by his attachment to the doctrine of Pan-psychism, and by his reservation of the right to utilise his highest

[1] *Recent Theistic Discussion*, 1921, chap. vii.

categories in his speculations as to the nature of the Supreme Being whose power is manifest in the universe. Professor Alexander stands for the type of Agnosticism which mediates between Naturalism and Idealism. Deity exists, but it is essentially unknowable. All that can be said of its nature is that it is the *nisus* towards a divine quality which pervades and persists in the infinite world. This deity of a sort, in contrast with the eternal God, gradually comes into being as a product of time, and as it is always 'the quality in front' it falls from the rank of deity after it appears and knows itself.[1] The great majority of the lecturers have stood on the common ground of a spiritual philosophy, but this is also the meeting-ground of diverse theological creeds—especially the theistic and the pantheistic—and different systems have been in evidence. The great majority have occupied and defended the theistic position. Those who adequately grappled with the great questions fell into two main groups—an Anglo-Hegelian and an Anglo-Kantian, which differ to some extent in their conception of the content of the idea of the Divine Being, and most distinctively in their view of the rational foundation on which religious faith ought to rest. One school believes in the Absolute who in a certain point of view may be called God, the other believes in God who in a certain point of view may be called the Absolute. One proves the existence of the Absolute on ontological lines supplemented by the modern argument based on the nature of knowledge and the contradictions of finitude. The other, notably represented by Professor Pringle-Pattison's *Idea of God*, and Professor Sorley's *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, varied and developed Kant's moral argument, at the same time that it has

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, 1920, ii. pp. 341 ff.

guarded itself against being identified with a purely pragmatical mode of reasoning. In both schools the scheme of doctrine has shrunk to modest proportions as compared with the pre-Kantian systems of Natural Theology, in which Clarke and Wolf, after demonstrating the divine existence, proceeded to the systematic exposition of the being, the attributes and the works of God. Anglo-Hegelian Theology wavers between Theism and Pantheism, and any attempt to separate the contributions into the two classes would be precarious and controversial. For over a century it has been matter of debate whether Hegel was to be reckoned a theist or a pantheist, and the same ambiguity has continued to cling to the position of some of his most influential disciples. When Dr. Bosanquet compares the universe as it exists in the Absolute to the plot and the characters of the *Divine Comedy* as they lived in the mind of Dante, this would seem to imply that the Absolute has the theistic note of a true personal existence, inasmuch as the author of a poem is naturally credited with the self-consciousness which is the mark of personality; but when he goes on to declare emphatically that the Absolute cannot be credited with purpose, and by consequence cannot be a good or a loving will, he negates an element which is no less vital than self-consciousness to the conception of personality and to the theistic creed.[1] The modern Pluralism which is chiefly associated with the name of William James has a theological side that has been a good deal discussed. In the *Varieties of Religious Experience*, however, James elected to devote himself to the investigation of the phenomena of religious experience; and though at the close he made a slight incursion into the transcendental realm, he

[1] *Individuality and Destiny*, 1912, pp. 391 ff.

did not use the occasion to develop his own 'over-beliefs' as to the nature of the powers of the spiritual world which, as he believed, make some response through the channel of the subconscious to the appeals of prayer.

I

The subject to be treated in these lectures is the material which has been contributed by the history of religion as the staple of a Philosophy of Religion. The view was expressed by Lord Gifford that Natural Theology, the Science of infinite being, should be 'treated as a strictly natural Science, as astronomy or chemistry.' It is obvious that Astronomy or Chemistry cannot be a perfect pattern, operating as they do with the methods, and fenced as they are by the limitations, of empirical Science. Natural Theology would on these terms be debarred from even essaying the transcendental task which is of its essence; and the meaning must be that a Religious Philosophy should take as its starting-point a body of observable and verifiable facts, and reach its conclusions through a rational manipulation of this material. The demand is reasonable, it is in fact one with which Rational Theology has generally sought to comply, and the only question has been as to what is the nature and range of the facts lying open to human observation which have most importance and significance as the starting-point of the theological inquest. The choice has lain between two realms or classes of facts—one supplied in the general constitution and course of things on our earth, and in the wider universe of which we have some cognisance, the other consisting of the distinctive class of historical and experiential facts which have been

comprehended under the name of religion. There are two ways of forming a judgment about a historical person—one to examine his recorded deeds, and the consequences flowing from them, the other to collect the testimony of those who claimed to know him at first hand and to enjoy his friendship ; and this may illustrate the two paths which have been followed by the investigating mind in its approach to God. One path is that taken by Philosophical Theology, which has fastened on certain aspects of the cosmos and of the being of man, and has interpreted them as vouching for the existence and elucidating the nature of the Supreme Being ; while the Philosophy of Religion has chosen as its point of departure.the experience in which mankind has cultivated communion with a Divine Being or Beings on the basis of definite ideas about their nature and powers, and has given evidence of the issue and the influence of the mystic enterprise in the cast and colour of the life of individuals and families and nations. Though particular thinkers have drawn on both classes of facts, and the two fields to some extent overlap, the distinction is real and substantial, and it is a question as to which procedure may claim priority and promises the richer results.

The method of Philosophical Theology, as has been said, has been to fasten upon certain features of our world which have an extraordinary character that excites wonder, and which are felt to point beyond themselves, and to ask to be interpreted as significant elements or aspects of a more majestic and harmonious whole. The phenomena which have thus served as the stimuli of thought may be distinguished as general and special. An example of the impressive general phenomenon is the contingency or dependence of things—the circumstance that nothing in space

and time can pretend to the status of self-supporting existence, but that everything, and very manifestly the human individual, owes its existence and its continuance in existence to the operation of a power or powers that is outside of itself and was anterior to itself. The grain of sand and the planet, the mountain and the solar system; plant, insect, reptile, bird, and beast; the human individual and the human race as a whole—each of these, following upon a time in which it was not yet, found itself or was found to have emerged out of non-existence, and attained to the dignity of a cosmic fact amid an immensity of similar cosmic facts, at the same time that each was compelled to recognise itself as a humble product or event which came to be because something else had previously existed. But while the mind may easily accustom itself to the observation that every single object had a cause—finding it as conceivable as that one link of a suspended chain is supported by a superior link—when it was made to appear that this relation of dependency extends throughout an unending series, the whole became as mysterious as a chain of which each link should depend from that immediately above it, but which had no uppermost link that was made fast to anything. It is this bewildering observation which prepared a warm welcome for the idea of God as the First Cause. A kindred feature of the universe is that the objects with which it is stored interact with and influence one another. Commonplace as the fact is, it has when pondered been found to be one of the true marvels of the world, that individual beings, material and spiritual, possess powers which enable them to invade the sphere of other beings, and influence their condition and behaviour, at the same time that they in their turn are exposed to similar incursions which carry

with them every possibility of benefit or injury, of pleasure or suffering, of perfection or destruction. The universe in fact is a sphere of intercourse in which not only do beings of the same kind sustain close relations with one another—made still more intimate in the case of man by the use of the mechanism of speech and by the interplay of the higher affections—but in which beings that represent very different modes of existence are to a large extent on visiting terms. This situation Lotze thought to be quite unintelligible and indeed impossible unless there also exists a Supreme Being to which all particular objects stand in a similar relation, which mediates their intercourse with one another, and which is clothed with at least some of the attributes that faith ascribes to God.[1] Another impressive aspect of the universe is that it contains innumerable objects which represent an ascending scale of powers and excellences. In the earliest treatise bearing the title of Natural Theology, Raymond of Sabunde distinguished four classes of beings according to their different grades of dignity—those which merely exist, those which live as well as exist, those which are sentient as well as alive, and the human species which in addition is endowed with reason and will.[2] When we trace the ascending scale, as manifested on our planet and culminating in man who, recapitulating the characteristics of the creatures beneath him, crowns them with his intellectual and moral powers, it is natural to suppose that the scale is continued upward to heights far exceeding the measure of the human equipment and achievement, and that it reaches a climax in the attributes and perfections of the

[1] Lotze, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Religion* (Eng. tr.), 1885, pp. 25 ff.

[2] *Theologia Naturalis*, Venice, 1581.

Infinite Spirit of whom and through whom are the varying degrees of perfection that appear in finite things.[1] The deepest impression, however, has been made by the observation that the world, whatever be the welter of prodigality and confusion which lies on the surface, is nevertheless at bottom an orderly world in which things can be depended on to behave in ways that can be formulated as laws, and in which, both on the large and on the small scale, ends that commend themselves to man as good are achieved by means which are recognised as appropriate and effective. This is the basis of the teleological proof, described by Kant as 'the oldest, the clearest and the most suited to the ordinary intelligence.'[2]

The wonderfulness of the world, in whose general arrangements man is thus involved, has seemed to him to culminate in the marvel of his own estate, and chiefly in his constitution, in which the spiritual blends with the material, and the animal is in the custody of reason and conscience. 'Many things are uncanny,' says Sophocles, 'and none is more uncanny than man.'[3] So it may still seem notwithstanding all that Science has made known concerning the immensities of space and time for the revision of human perspectives and the humbling of human pride. Man's predicament may seem more uncanny than ever to the modern mind. 'The writer of these lines,' says Carlyle, 'has witnessed overhead the infinite deep, with greater and lesser lights, bright-rolling, silent-beaming, hurled forth by the hand of God; around him and under his feet the wonderfullest earth, with her winter snow-

[1] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, viii. 6. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I. 1. q. 2. 3.

[2] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, *Werke* (Berl. Ausgabe), Bd. iii., 1904, p. 415.

[3] *Antigone*, l. 332.

storms and her summer spice-airs, and unaccountablest of all himself standing there. He stood in the lapse of time, he saw eternity behind him and before him. Oak trees fell, young acorns sprang, man too, new sent from the unknown, of tiniest size, who waxed into stature, into strength of sinew, passionate fire and light; in other men the light was growing dim, the sinews all feeble; they sank motionless into ashes, into invisibility; returned back to the unknown. O brother, is that what thou callest prosaic; of small interest? Of small interest and for thee? Awake, poor troubled sleeper; shake off thy torpid nightmare-dream; look, see, behold it, the flame image, splendours high as heaven, terrors deep as hell, this is God's creation, this is man's life.' [1]

Man has been the incentive and the support of theological thinking because of two marvels—the wonder of his constitution and the wonder of his history. In meditating on his constitution attention has naturally been riveted on the endowment of reason, and it has usually been thought that the place it has in himself is a reflection of its status in the universe of being. When, further, the contents of the mind are examined there is found among them the idea of an Infinite Being, clothed with all possible perfections of power, wisdom and goodness, and the unique idea has been fastened on as in one way or another the evidence and the guarantee of the existence of the corresponding reality. In recent times it has been increasingly thought that even the royal intellectual endowment is a badge of lesser dignity than the moral nature of man, and that in his ethical life, illumined as it is by lofty ideals of which he acknowledges the authority even in his disloyalty and rebellion, we have our clearest glimpse

[1] *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, 'The Diamond Necklace.'

of the spirit animating the power which underlies the life and movement of the world. Again, the story of the race has been felt to be a fragment which can be fitted into some greater epic, and which requires more for its explanation than the agents and the factors which have served for its secondary causes. Though there is much in human history which would seem to be sheer profligacy, much which has the mark of failure and futility, while running through it all there is a deep vein of unspeakable tragedy, it is also incontestable that there is a sum of gains which make up a dazzling achievement of intellect and will, and also a more than respectable history of moral progress ; and when it is considered how small is the extent to which the course of events was preceded by human design, and mighty things were accomplished by concerted human action, we may well have the impression that the drama has evolved according to the plan of a higher intelligence which understood how to make use of all instruments, even of those which were unconscious, unwilling and hostile, for the gradual accomplishment of deep and vast designs. Thus at many points and in many ways the standing wonders of the order of things have invited and even compelled the venture of a religious view of existence, while they also make it seem probable that any doctrine of a commonplace stamp is false, and that the truth as to the ultimate nature and meaning of the world will turn out to be not less but more sublime than its most heroic metaphysic.

II

The second mode of procedure, as has been indicated, is to take as the starting-point the mass of

facts which it has been agreed to group under the name of religion. These include the mythologies and the theologies which have embodied the results of religious thinking, and also the manifold activities of religious communities. They further include the data of subjective religion, or the content of religious experience, with its basis of faith, its accompaniment of varied emotional states, and its expression in ceremonial and moral obedience. And it is this realm of religious facts which would appear to have the strongest claim on the attention of the thinker who is in search of materials for a Theology. As the study of the history of human morals and manners is a prerequisite of the construction of an ethical system, as the study of the history of the Fine Arts is the presupposition of Æsthetics, so may it be confidently maintained that the investigation of the history of religion is the proper and indispensable preliminary to the construction of a system of religious truth. The ideas concerning God, and concerning man in his relations with God, which have emerged and taken root in the mind of the peoples and of religious communities, are entitled to be made the foundation of a discussion of the nature of the ultimate reality ; and those ideas and provisions for which it can be reasonably claimed that they represent the highest reach of the apprehending mind in its conjunction with religious experience have a right of possession which is entitled to the fullest respect until and unless the ideas can be discredited by being shown to be self-contradictory, or inconsistent with better authenticated parts of an accepted system of coherent human knowledge.

It cannot, indeed, be said that in modern times there has been any lack of interest in the data of the religious sphere, nor on the other hand is there any

novelty in the procedure which makes the religious data the basis of a scheme of Religious Philosophy. In truth, the investigation of the facts, historical and experimental, has been undertaken with extraordinary ardour—an ardour not more conspicuous in those to whom it was a labour of piety, than to others to whom it merely appealed as dealing with the most mysterious of the manifestations of the enigmatical spirit of man, or as furnishing an additional opportunity of testing the key of the evolutionary doctrine in the opening of old and obstinate locks. The outcome has been an enormous volume of literature in which a fourfold contribution may be distinguished—the preparatory labour in the collection and sifting of the data supplied by religions of all ages and of every degree of spiritual and intellectual rank, the systematisation of the materials and the classification of religions, the investigation of religion on the subjective side with a view to the construction of a Psychology of Religion, and finally the attempt to discharge the task of genetic explanation by giving an account of the originating cause and the primitive forms of religion, and also by specifying the factors by which, and the laws in accordance with which, the course of religious evolution has been guided. As to these vast labours it may be said in general that on the historical side a large addition has been made to the sum of man's knowledge of man, and that in description, analysis and classification a notable addition has been made to the accurate and ordered stores of scientific knowledge; but that in the matter of causal explanation there are many ingenious conjectures and ill-supported hypotheses which have been propounded by a precipitate dogmatism and accepted by an unscientific credulity. It is, moreover, a misfortune that none of the acknow-

ledged masters of the Science of Religion has felt it to be his vocation to put his hand to the task which is the sole justification of the immeasurable industry which has been expended on the details—the task, that is, of extracting from the historical data the materials which could serve as the foundation and furnish the staple of an all-embracing system of Religious Philosophy. The attempt to fulfil this crowning task was undertaken in a fashion by thinkers of the Christian Church who constructed systems of Religious Philosophy under the name of Systematic Theology, but who in the older period worked under the limitation that they neither had, nor desired to have, much knowledge of any religion save their own. The most influential and famous of the philosophical attempts to construct a system on the basis of religious history was made by Hegel, who had the merit of bringing the whole field within the sweep of his thought, but who wrote when the religions of the world were as yet imperfectly unveiled, and epitomised them in generalisations which in some cases show brilliant flashes of insight, but in some cases also are paradoxical misrepresentations. With Hegel may also be named Höffding, who in his important *Philosophy of Religion* embraced the whole religious field in his outlook, but whose work suffered from the fact that his knowledge of Christian Theology was impressionist, and that he had taken little pains to make acquaintance with any other religious systems save Brahmanism and Buddhism. The work of Pfleiderer and Flint had an exceptional interest owing to the fact that each had the threefold wealth of the historian, the Christian theologian, and the philosopher. There seems to be room for a contribution from any whose business it is to know more about Philosophy than is required for the labours of the anthropologist,

and more about the history and the doctrines of Christianity than is commonly professed by the philosopher.

III

Regarded from the empirical point of view—as a synthesis of human faith, feeling, and endeavour, religion may well be thought to be the most extraordinary phenomenon that is encountered in the world of men. It is part of the penalty that it has paid for taking its place alongside of other social institutions, and becoming embodied in the routine of common life, that it needs an effort to realise how widely it differs in essential conditions from other concerns which engage human interest and stimulate human conduct. It has often been made a reproach to man by his religious monitors that he is a sense-bound creature—held in bondage by the things that have colour and melody, sweetness and softness; and it would not have been surprising, in view of his bodily constitution, if the charge had been wholly justified; but there are facts of another order, and one is that he has believed in a being or beings whom he has not seen or heard or touched, has filled the earth with God's houses or temples in which he has expected to meet with the unseen Lord in a peculiar intimacy, addresses to Him praises, confessions and petitions, offers gifts of various kinds, and believes that in return he receives blessings and guidance apportioned to his needs. There is nothing in the general life of the race which can be compared to the intrepidity, it may even be said the temerity, of the religious enterprise. It is no doubt true that audacity is the special note of human history—it is audacious enough that man, so incon-

spicuous in size, so short-lived, in some respects so ill-equipped, should have set himself to impose his yoke upon all other terrestrial creatures, impressed into his service the most powerful and also the most subtle of the forces of nature, and organised a kingdom of knowledge that extends from the cell and the atom to the illimitable spaces and the immeasurable objects of the stellar heavens ; but even this undertaking may be thought to be eclipsed by the daring of the religious venture in which he has sought, not merely to penetrate to the deepest secrets of existence, and make the Infinite submit to the embrace of his finite mind, but to perfect his human weakness by linking it to divine omnipotence, and to defy death itself by seeking a refuge in the Eternal.

The religious relationship, it is further to be observed, has been valued and cultivated by mankind in general. There is in human nature an element of eccentricity or perversity, and even a capacity of believing a doctrine because it happens to be absurd, and this might have been deemed a sufficient explanation of the phenomenon if religion had only been met with in esoteric coteries of peculiar people, or in the realms of unsubdued barbarism and untutored ignorance ; but whatever may prove to be its home and refuge in the future, it is undeniable that in the past and in the present it has been bound up with the interests and aspirations of mankind as a whole, and has been linked with the highest departments of the general life. It is of immemorial antiquity. However far we travel backward in historic ages we can discern the worshipper, the altar and the uplifted hands of prayer ; and though the perspective has been indefinitely extended by the illumination of long tracts of prehistoric time, the vestiges show that in the

neolithic, and probably also in the palæolithic age, there already existed ideas and practices of a character and complexion which justify the conclusion that man has had religious dispositions as long as he has been identifiable as man. Persistent in time, it may also be said to have the notes of *ubique et ab omnibus*. No doubt there are and always have been irreligious individuals, but so also, as Hegel pointed out, has there always been a certain proportion of blind persons—not to speak of the small minority of human beings who seem to be destitute of moral sense, and the considerable minority for whom music is an unenjoyable pastime and a meaningless noise. It has been asserted that there are and have been tribes destitute of religion, but of late the assertion has been made with lessening confidence, since on a closer scrutiny it has commonly appeared either that the reporter had affirmed the non-existence of religion because he had found no ideas or practices which he deemed worthy of the hallowed name, or else that he had not been allowed to penetrate to the deepest secrets of the tribal life. Among highly civilised peoples religion shows a vast diversity of form and content, but it cannot be said that to be religious is a mark of age or of youth, of manhood or of womanhood, of wealth or of poverty, of intelligence or of stupidity, of learning or of ignorance. In modern societies it cuts across all natural and artificial distinctions; and if none of these distinctions can prevent a person becoming irreligious, neither does any of itself predestine him to unbelief or religious indifference.

Religion has also made a deep impression by its accompanying signs of power. That it is at least a power has been agreed, and the only question was whether it has been a power for good, or a power for

evil. The indictment of Lucretius was that it had been the inspiration of innumerable and hideous crimes; the eighteenth century reproduced the accusation on the strength of what religion had done in Christian times to engender hatred, to organise persecution, and to provoke wars; and in our own time the doctrine has been disseminated, and has been acted on in Russia, that it is an opiate which hinders the social emancipation of the toiling multitudes. On the other side it has been contended with greater weight of evidence that it is an instrument by which some of the most difficult and most important work in the world has been done. It has been a potent factor in moulding the character of nations by the admixture of ideal and ethical elements with the natural endowment of selfishness and passion. It may be thought that the state of Europe to-day does little credit to the religious authorities that have been responsible for its tuition; but it is still true, as Troeltsch has observed, that there is a higher unity of the European peoples which consists in the possession of a common stock of elevated religious beliefs, sound moral principles, and healthy domestic and social customs, and for this it has been mainly indebted to the educative and leavening influence of organised religion extending through the Christian centuries. The character of the Scottish people has owed much more than it is willing to own to the indoctrination with the fear of God and a recognition of divine laws, which formed a useful counteractive to native tendencies that made somewhat strongly for sensuality and sordidness. Religion has also had no small success in the task of the formation of a good type of individual character, and in the remaking of evil character; while in its elemental strength it has proved capable of detaching the soul from all objects

that human nature holds dear, and even disposing it to offer them joyfully as a sacrifice in the name of duty. It may sometimes appear as if this power were a thing of the past—the colossus being in the impotent and humiliating plight of the decrepit giants depicted in the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and it is doubtless true that the interest formerly taken in religion has been diverted in considerable measure to Science, to humanitarian philanthropy and above all to political projects. But the most that can be affirmed on the basis of long views of history is that religion has been subject to the law of ebb and flow. In the late eighteenth century the cultured population of Edinburgh was classified as Pagan and Christian, and thereafter it was so strongly apprehended by the Evangelical Revival as to forget that it had ever been anything but serious and orthodox —a fact which may be cited as evidence and symbol of the law of the recurring re-awakening and resurrection to which the religious spirit has been made subject.

It may also be confidently said that religion has enhanced the dignity of man. Lucretius saw nothing in worship but the pitiable spectacle of mortals grovelling before their gods; and it was a commonplace of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment that priests had invented religion, and kings exploited it, as a means of keeping the peoples in a lucrative bondage of ignorance and fear. But the general effect, at least in Europe, has been to raise man to a higher plane. In teaching the human being to think of himself as made in the image of the Highest, and endowed with the privileges of the offspring and the redeemed of God, Christianity enriched human experience with a religious feeling of the aristocratic order, accompanied by a spirit of *noblesse oblige*, and it also inspired to heroic ventures, philanthropical and political, and

even intellectual, in support of the lofty spiritual status. It is matter of observation that vital religion lifts the soul to a decidedly higher level than that on which the human life naturally runs its course. To follow a trade or carry on a business, and to be much in anxiety about income and expenditure, or much in hope about investments, to marry and beget children, and feel that there is no place like home, to take an interest in casual reading and in politics, to find pleasure in the society of one's friends, and to fill up what is then lacking to happiness by the recreations of the leisure hour and the holiday, is a programme with which one may get through the allotted span quite reputably, but to which also an important addition of idealistic elements is made when a soul is awakened to the realisation of a spiritual world, and to the acknowledgment of its claims. To possess a satisfying view of existence as a whole, and of its first and final Cause, to make a spiritual valuation of human life, to be haunted by a vision of the divinely beautiful, to revere a moral ideal which towers above custom and convention and to aim at living up to it, to believe in the realisation of the *summum bonum*—these things, which seem to be a high cultural achievement when stated in scholastic language, have been attained by multitudes of commonplace people in every land upon whom an ethical religion, and notably the Christian religion, has laid its spell.

Finally, it may be observed, and the present course of lectures will be largely concerned with sustaining and developing the thesis, that religion has made a many-sided appeal to man, and has laid hold of human nature in the multiplicity and manifoldness of its interests and principles of action. Not only has the realm of God and divine things been accepted as equally real with the world of nature, but mankind

has been stirred and moved by it, and has reacted to it, in the same characteristic ways. On a general view of human striving it appears that there are five principal ways in which man has responded to the visible world which serves him for his dwelling-place and workshop, and to the objects with which it has been stored, enriched and beautified. First and chiefly, he has sought to use it or exploit it for the satisfaction of his wants, and the increase of his comfort and well-being; and to this end he has engaged in hunting and fishing, in the care of flocks and herds and the tillage of the soil, in mining and seafaring, in industry and commerce. Secondly, he has found that it threatened him at many points and in many ways with pain and damage and even destruction, and he has devised protective measures of many sorts—against the beasts, against the wasting forces of nature, against sickness and disease, against the rapacity and the cruelty of his own human kind. Thirdly, it became plain that there was a sense in which his world imperiously required him to obey it—that it had physical laws to which he must conform his behaviour if he was not to be injured and crushed, and that there were moral laws which visited upon the children of disobedience, it might be less palpable, but even graver and more lasting penalties. Fourthly, this same world was found by him to contain many things that are lovable—trees and flowers, rivers and mountains and the glories of the heavens, birds and animals of many species, especially those that seem to cling to him instinctively, and, above all, his human kinsfolk with the charmed circle of friendship, and of the home that is transfigured by the sanctities of the love of man and wife and of parent and child. And lastly, he has sought to understand his world—primarily, no doubt, that he might the more effectually benefit by it and defend

himself against it ; but also and increasingly because there was set in his heart the desire to know the nature, the behaviour and the causes of things—the harvest from the long-drawn labour being the hierarchy of the Sciences, which now far transcend the power of any finite mind to survey them in the whole scope of their achievements, and the succession of the Philosophies which have sought to grasp the totality of existence, and to penetrate to its ground.

And it is with the same breadth of interest, and in the same ways, that man has reacted to a higher realm of divine things—dimly as this has loomed upon him by comparison, and confused as have been his testimonies as to what he has found it to contain. In the famous attempts that have been made to define the deepest intention of religion man's concern with it has usually been limited to a single aspect—theoretical, emotional or practical—but on a survey of the whole evidence it does not seem doubtful that God, or the world of the divine objects, has laid a spell on human nature in the entirety of its interests, and has summoned into action the whole range of its aspirations and capacities. As in the dealings with the world, the primary and most constant endeavour has been to possess God, and by possessing God to be assured of the attainment and retention of all that enters into the idea of a chief good. Along with this there has run through the history of religion the felt need for protection against the unseen powers—and that either because they are by their nature dangerous to the worshipper, or because they have been moved to wrath and threatenings by human neglect and transgression. Again, the world of the divine, equally with the visible world of nature, has been recognised as a realm of laws which insist on

being reverenced and obeyed. Once more, man has encountered in his religion, and increasingly on the level of the higher faiths, divine objects which he could love, which he could not help loving, and which it was possible to go on to love with an all-consuming passion. And finally, the spiritual world has challenged the human being to endeavour to understand it. It has claimed his attention by making its power felt in the experience both of nations and of individuals, by laying on him the burden of mysteries which he could neither ignore nor explain, and also of problems which he felt he could aspire to solve. At this task of understanding and interpretation he has laboured through all known centuries, and never more unweariedly than during the last hundred years, when, even if faith has weakened as to what may be known of God and His ways, the mysteries of existence have not ceased to engender wonder and foster speculation, while curiosity has only deepened as to what man believed in the past that he knew about God, what he hoped to receive at the hand of God, and what he sought to do and to be as the condition of enjoying communion with God, of being assimilated to the divine life, and of attaining to immortality.

# CHAPTER II

## THE TYPES OF THE RELIGIOUS SUBJECT

RELIGION on its earthward side is a mighty and sustained enterprise of the human spirit, whose aims and methods lie open to observation equally with those of Politics, Art and Morals, and which similarly invites a judgment upon the measure of visible success or failure that has been achieved in the pursuit of its declared ends. At the outset of such a study, it is natural to fix attention on the human subject that has cultivated relations with the divine being, and to examine the equipment which man has brought to the task, and the experiences in which his spiritual gains have been realised. This investigation is the task of the Psychology of Religion, which during the last quarter of a century has enjoyed an extraordinary vogue, not only because of the peculiar features of the religious phenomena, but also because of the high expectations which the investigation has raised. For the inquiry has been welcomed equally by those who are in search of additional supports for their faith, and by those who think it would be for the good of mankind if the religious view of existence could be finally discredited as a morbid, a useless and an expensive hypothesis.

In an informing survey of the literature, Professor Oesterreich speaks of the Psychology of Religion as a new Science which dates from the publication of James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and which

had a harbinger in Starbuck's analysis of the material that he elicited by his questionnaire from a select list of serious-minded American citizens.[1] He adds that there is no reason to be surprised if America has made an important contribution to Theology, since it has always reserved some space in its heart alongside of its Mammon-worship for vital piety and moral ideals. The actual state of things is that former ages made large contributions to the Psychology of Religion by the collection and interpretation of its data, and that the modern discipline has made copious additions to the materials, and introduced a simplified and secularised method. The literature of Buddhism contains a very elaborate system of Psychology. The Scriptural data are of such compass that for more than a century Biblical Psychology has had a recognised place in the Theological Encyclopaedia as one of the sub-divisions of Biblical Science. Protestant Theology has specially cultivated the doctrines of Subjective Soteriology, which consist of affirmations concerning the genesis, the development and the content of the Christian experience. The method of Schleiermacher was to extract from experience the subject-matter of a system of Christian doctrine, and to re-edit the particular doctrines of the Protestant tradition with the help of a purely subjective criterion. The innovation is that, while Theology worked with a combination of observation and dogmatism, the modern Psychology of Religion has discarded theological presuppositions, and operates exclusively with the postulates and the axioms of Empirical Science. This antithesis may be exhibited in the three main particulars.

In the first place, Theology had recognised, and the

[1] *Einführung in die Religionspsychologie*, 1917, p. 4.

Psychology of Religion does not recognise, a didactic authority. While the former bowed before the authority of the Scriptures or of the Church as settling the most important questions in the field, Psychology relies as a matter of course on the evidence that can be collected by observation and testimony, and possibly experiment, and proceeds to draw its own conclusions. Doubtless it was not unheard of in Theology to practise introspection, and to describe the religious states on the basis of first-hand observation. St. Paul gives a somewhat elaborate scheme of religious Psychology; and this was obtained, not so much from a study of the Hebrew Scriptures, as by an analysis of the content of his life in the Spirit, and by reflection on the successive stages through which he had passed. The Christian theologians who formulated the Christian doctrines of Anthropology and Soteriology looked with their own eyes into the differences between the regenerate soul and the natural man. At the same time, it was generally held that the crowning task of the theologian in this field was to reproduce the teaching relevant to spiritual states and processes which could be collected from the records of Revelation, or which had been authoritatively formulated in ecclesiastical dogma. Jonathan Edwards was no mean psychological observer, but in the *Treatise concerning Religious Affections* it is his exposition of the Scriptural proof which invariably forms the staple of a positive or a critical argument.

The second distinctive feature of the scientific work was that it was descriptive—not judicial or normative. The theologian's judgments of value were replaced by observations and generalisations as to matters of fact. While the theologian's chief concern was to distinguish the experiences accompanying salvation from those of a shallow or fictitious

piety, the psychologist approached them *sine studio et ira*, and even welcomed variety as an enrichment of the subject-matter of his Science. The theological attitude was like that of a farmer who should give a rough classification of the creatures on his holding as valuable, worthless and noxious, and perhaps proceed to declare that his cattle were his real wealth, and to complain of vermin and pests; while the empirical standpoint would be represented by the biologist who found the sheep as interesting as the cattle, the vermin perhaps more interesting than either, and the garden all the richer because the bushes and the fruit-trees were infested by many species of injurious insects. The old Protestant theologians were well aware that there are many varieties of religious experience, but they took no pleasure in those which diverged from the evangelical pattern, while the task of the scientific investigator was merely to analyse and describe the classic form of conversion, and to place alongside of it other modes of thought and feeling, which, however their spiritual value might be appraised, had at least an equal claim to be treated with respect in their character of mental states and events.

The third and most characteristic feature of the modern discipline is the limitation which it prescribes in the matter of causal explanation. It shares in the modern passion for genetic treatment—for adding, that is, to the description of what anything is and does, information or speculation as to how it came to be; and in discharging this task it has restricted itself as a matter of course to the recognition of those factors which belong to the system of natural causes. Christian Theology, it is true, recognised that there are energies and influences operating in the spiritual sphere which have the same kind of efficiency that is

ascribed in other realms to the machinery of natural causation. The influence of teaching and example, and above all of heredity, was very strongly emphasised when it was sought to explain the facts of human sinfulness. The systems of Christian Doctrine also contained a section which, under the rubric of the means of grace, dealt with factors that to some extent operated as secondary causes in the spiritual life. From the theological point of view, however, it was felt to be necessary to a real explanation that spiritual effects should be traced back to the supernatural factor of divine grace or the operations of the Holy Spirit. From the psychological point of view, on the other hand, to have recourse to the factor of divine agency is tantamount to the abandonment of the attempt at explanation. In the debate on the origin of religion, for example, the conditions of a scientific explanation were met by the theory that religion began through men taking their dreams too seriously, or imagining that they had seen ghosts, or cherishing a wish which was the spring of vain imaginations, or even doing some elementary reasoning; but it was not permissible to argue for the old thesis that the impulse to worship proceeded from a primeval special revelation, or that the Holy Spirit awakened in the finite creature the consciousness of his dependence on, and his kinship with, a God in whom he lives and moves and has his being. Pelagius would have been held to be in order because, although he attributed his religious experience to divine grace, it was explained that grace was only a name for the power of truth and the force of example; and Augustine would have been ruled out of court when he declared grace to be a supernatural energy that was infused into the soul

out of the hidden deeps of the life of God. In thus rigorously confining itself to natural causality, the modern discipline is entirely within its rights: it may be said that in doing so it only sticks to its last, and rightly sticks to its last; but it still remains possible, and even probable, that the thoughts of God are wider than the measures of man's mind, and that the realm of spiritual reality has not felt bound to respect the principles which govern a strictly scientific inquiry. In any case the Psychology of Religion, more, perhaps, than any other special science, leaves the impression that the purely empirical outlook gives a fragmentary view of the universe, and that it needs to be widened and rounded off by a spiritual philosophy.[1]

The initial task of Religious Psychology is to determine what is the proper subject of the religious experience, or at least to select the subject in which that experience is most characteristically revealed and most profitably studied. There is a choice, to begin with, between an individual subject, as presupposed in General Psychology, and a collective subject or human group, such as supplies the subject-matter of the modern discipline of Social Psychology. Further, there are three individual subjects whose claims have to be weighed, and there are at least two different groups for which precedence has been asserted. In each class of the subjects, individual and collective, a distinction has to be drawn between those for whom religion has a secondary though substantial interest, and those who make it their primary and dominating concern. The individual class contains at least three subjects which have made a prominent figure in religious history—the human being as such, to whom

[1] G. Steven, *The Psychology of the Christian Soul*, 1911; H. R. Mackintosh, *Aspects of Christian Belief*, 1923, ch. x.

religion has been something, the convert, to whom it has been much, and the saint, to whom it has been everything. And there are two collective subjects which have been similarly distinguished. The first is the natural community of the tribe or nation, which has usually assigned to religion an importance that was at least co-ordinate with that of the weighty avocations and enterprises of the mundane sphere. The second is the sacred community or Church which has in religion the reason for its existence, and which has therefore naturally believed that the spiritual interests entrusted to its keeping were paramount, and has usually acted in accordance with this conviction. In the present lecture we shall touch on the general characteristics of each of these religious subjects, reserving for a later chapter the detailed examination of the intellectual powers and capacities which they have brought to bear in their apprehension of God and divine things.

I

1. The first of the individual subjects is the typical human being, regarded as the possessor of a religious nature and of a religious experience. It is no doubt difficult to discover the individual in the state of nature. The factors which make up his congenital endowment for religion are inseparably blended with the educative influences by which he has been served heir to the religious ideas and practices that are current in the society to which he owes birth and nurture. The study of the religion of the child sheds no great light on the matter, since the chief contribution of the child is to give back the ideas and impressions which he has been taught. Still less does the savage represent human nature in its primitive simplicity, for the savage is an almost unqualified product of tradition

and custom, and his scheme of religious thought and practice is often in the highest degree artificial. At the same time, it is not open to doubt that man as man has constitutional religious characteristics of which some account can be given on the basis of Comparative Theology and of psychological observation. In the older treatises on General Psychology, indeed, it was taken for granted that the materials were so scanty that they might be neglected—the index of William James's *Principles of Psychology* does not contain a single reference to the religious endowment of man ; but during the present century, and largely through the influence of James's later investigations, the scientific analysis of mind has increasingly reflected man's own estimate of the high importance of his religious life.

Man as man has a title to be regarded as a religious subject, were it only because of the universality of religious feeling. The elemental religious feeling, it has often been said, is fear, and the modern account given of its life-history is that this fear was blended with wonder and became awe, and that awe being joined with tender emotion, passed into reverence. It should, however, be added that fear, awe, and reverence, when called forth by a religious object, have a quality or tone which is markedly different from what is experienced when these emotions are evoked by objects of the secular order. The famous thesis of Schleiermacher was that the religious feeling which is common to man is unique in respect that it involves a sense of absolute dependence.[1] While, however, it may be held that man ought to have such a feeling of absolute dependence, and while in pantheistic

[1] 'The common element in all pious states, and consequently the essence of piety, is that we feel ourselves absolutely dependent, to wit, dependent on God.' *Der christliche Glaube*, 1821, i. p. 33. So the *Reden über die Religion*, passim.

religion, and also under Islam and in Calvinism, it has been met with in almost uncompromising strength, the belief has also been widely prevalent that the relations of man and God are rather of the nature of an alliance or a scheme of co-operation. Professor Otto has contended that the specifically religious feeling, which he calls creaturely feeling, is a profound sense of the utter otherness of God—who is the *mysterium tremendum*, and of the nothingness of the human worshipper. The divine impresses man as the unapproachable, overwhelming in His majesty, terrible in His goings forth, wrapped in mystery; and in His presence the creature abhors himself, and counts himself dust and ashes.[1] Here again it might be objected that the feeling has not been universal that the sacred and the profane are separated by an impassable gulf. While this holds of primitive thinking, the conception of the divine culminated in the paradox that God is not only astoundingly unlike to man and remote from man, but that He is also astoundingly like to him, and nearer to him than the body of flesh and blood. It is difficult, probably impossible, to determine the precise content and reference of religious feeling, but these attempts at least agree in supporting the view, which has also the general experience in its favour, that nothing stirs the heart in exactly the same way as does the presence and the thought of the divine.

The religious attitude characteristic of the normal

[1] 'I call it *Kreaturgefühl*—the feeling of the creature that sinks to earth in its nothingness, and fades away in presence of that which is above all creatures.' *Das Heilige*, [10], 1923, pp. 10 ff. The 'otherness' of the sacred is also emphasised by Durkheim. 'There is nothing left with which to characterise the sacred in relation to the profane except their heterogeneity.' *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (Eng. tr.), 1915, p. 381.

individual has been much discussed in the theological schools, and opinion has varied widely as to the kind, the amount, and the value of the piety which can be credited to him as a representative of his species. In Christian Theology the question has been elaborately treated under the heads of the original state and the fallen condition of man; and the common doctrine has been that he has undergone a corruption of nature which has indisposed and disqualified him for communion with God, while in the Augustinian school this view has sometimes been pressed to the point of affirming that the natural man is so completely under the dominion of sin that the spirit of his life has become sheer hatred of God and opposition to His will. In contrast with this it was a tenet of the eighteenth-century illumination, illustrated in one of Voltaire's romances, in which a North-American Indian figures as the censor of European impiety and vice, that man inherits a spirit of natural piety which is checked and repressed by the evil influences that are developed with the progress of civilisation. The truth lies between the two positions. Man as man is far from being irreligious, and it is certainly not natural to him to loathe God, and to organise his life as a deliberate warfare against God. The figure of Prometheus has excited his horror rather than his admiration, and he has not dreamed of recognising in it his own portrait. On the other hand, it is certain that he has no great natural endowment of the qualities which in the higher religions are reckoned to enter into true piety. While he is disposed to seek God, he is too heavily weighted by animal and selfish propensities to feel at home with a righteous and holy God. The normal human attitude has been defined by Otto in his observation

that man has been at one and the same time fascinated and repelled by the divine.[1] He has been drawn to God by expectation, duty, love and curiosity—doubtless also by more secret ties; but he has also fled from His presence under the sense of His awful majesty, and in the fear that He might break forth upon him as a ravening lion or as a consuming fire. These two aspects of the human attitude were noticed by the writer who, in the story of Jacob's wrestling, pictured the patriarch as striving with God, and being smitten as an enemy, while yet he clave to Him as his friend, and would not let Him go until He blessed him. (Gen. xxxii. 24 ff.)

2. The second of the capital individual subjects is conveniently described as the convert. The great religions have been at one in teaching that man is by nature in an evil plight of ignorance, misery and peril, and they have consistently affirmed the necessity of enlightenment, of emancipation, and of regeneration. The convert, understood in a wide sense, is one who has so responded to the demands and promises of his religion that his character has been profoundly modified, and that its principles and laws have come to govern the general tenour of his life and conduct. The instruments employed for conversion have been in the main three—the preaching of a gospel, education and training, and sacred rites of the sacramental kind which serve as channels of grace. These methods have been combined in practice, though with persistent conflict of theory as to how much efficacy was to be attributed to each in the production of the desired type of character, the reinforcement of its vitality, and the quickening of its powers. The universal religions have had

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

different degrees of success in the attempt to re-fashion the raw material of humanity after the pattern of their ideals; and it is not surprising if Christianity, which has promised an essentially spiritual salvation and which has conjoined its promises with the sternest demands, has also had the largest measure of apparent failure. It may not, however, be overlooked that beneath the stratum which can be fairly described as a converted or re-made humanity, there is a very large and important class of the Christian Church which can be called leavened, and which may with equal justice be described as a partial spiritual success and as a partial failure. The authentic converts—those who, as tested by their dominant convictions and principles, represent a real remodelling of the human material after a higher pattern—represent many degrees of attainment. In particular, there is a recognisable hall-mark of the converts of the periods of origin, reformation and revival, and another shown by those of the later generations who are in the main the products of education and training, and whose conversion substantially consists in the fact that they reproduce the general lineaments of the type of religious and moral character that is the respectable product of the diffused spiritual influence of a historic religious community.

As the chief aim of the great religions, and notably of Christianity, has been to produce the regenerate man, they have naturally had much to say about conversion, the stages of sanctification, and the means by which the spiritual results are achieved. The topics of the second birth and the stages of the new life bulk largely in the higher religions of India. Jesus required a change of heart—which meant much more than repentance as popularly understood, implying as it did that the disciple was to be a man of a new

order, who would love and trust God as the heavenly Father, who in comparison with the things of the Kingdom would hold cheaply the goods of wealth and honour that men naturally prize as the best things in life, and whose dealings with his fellow-men, and even with strangers and enemies, would be inspired by love, meekness and clemency. The Pauline and the Johannine literature throw into bold relief the necessity of regeneration, and at the same time magnify the work of God in effecting the change. In Theology the subject has been very fully treated under the rubric of Subjective Soteriology, which includes the topics of faith, repentance, regeneration, sanctification and the mystical union. And most recently the American School has fastened on the convert as the most instructive if not also the most important of the religious subjects.[1]

Conversion is a very large and a very complex phenomenon. A complete treatment would embrace the following points :—(1) the general conditions under which conversion takes place, and the means by which it is effected ; (2) the duration of the process, as illustrated in the distinction of the sudden and the gradual conversion ; (3) the varieties of the faith which is the normal presupposition of conversion, distinguished by reference to the strength of the faith and the grounds on which it rests ; (4) the nature of the blessings appropriated, with a comparative view of the way in which the content of the experience has varied in the great religions, and specially in the chief divisions of the Christian Church ; (5) the effects following upon the experience of the radical change ;

[1] E. D. Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, 1899. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 1902. G. A. Coe, *The Psychology of Religion*, 1916.

(6) the explanations of the experience that have been given by the converts themselves, and by the theological and scientific schools. At present we confine our attention to the topics of the content and the origin of the conversion-experience.

(*a*) It is one of the services of the modern Psychology of Religion that it has brought to light the variety of the satisfactions experienced in conversion. In the traditional scheme of Protestant Theology it was agreed to recognise as typical the conversion which had its prototype in the spiritual history of Augustine and Luther, and which had been reproduced in its essential features in revered figures of the evangelical school. The cardinal boons were conceived as deliverance from the guilt of sin—described from different points of view as justification, forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, adoption; and deliverance from the power of sin—begun on earth in the form of a progressive sanctification, and destined to be completed in the state of glory. There were also secondary blessings which were recognised as proceeding and flowing from the new religious relationship and the new spiritual condition—a well-known list being assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end. Starbuck's investigation made it appear that what is still ordinarily sought and found by the convert within the pale of Protestant Christianity can be described in terms of one or other or both of the fundamental blessings. In his table of 'the motives and forces present at conversion,' he reports that 14 per cent. testified that they were influenced by the fear of death or hell, 16 per cent. that they were impelled by remorse, conviction for sin, etc., and these two groups, amounting to 30 per cent., may be combined as

witnessing to the experience that deliverance from the guilt of sin (including its penalties) is the essence of the Christian salvation. The converts, given as 22 per cent., who declared that they had been actuated by a desire to follow out a moral ideal, used a formula which gave expression to the experience that this salvation consists essentially in deliverance from the power of sin. The self-regarding motives other than those connected with fear and remorse were returned at the low figure of 6 per cent., and the other altruistic motives, which might perhaps be subsumed under the impulse towards sanctification, only numbered 5 per cent.[1]

The following table was designed to bring out 'in what conversion consists':

| | |
|---|---|
| Spontaneous awakening | 24 per cent. |
| Forgiveness | 16 per cent. |
| Public confession | 16 per cent. |
| Sense of oneness (with God, etc.) | 14 per cent. |
| Self-surrender | 13 per cent. |
| Determination | 9 per cent. |
| Aid | 8 per cent.[2] |

The table is far from being a model of method and classification, and it does not fully bring out what was the chief gain. Many of the persons interrogated must have belonged to several classes, and the percentages are in consequence unreliable. It is as if an inquiry were made as to what had been the experiences of some hundreds of persons who had been saved after shipwreck, and a report was issued to the effect that 24 per cent. stated that they had been rescued when helpless and unconscious, 16 per cent. that they had suffered no bad effects, 16 per cent. that they attended

[1] *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 52. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 94.

a service of thanksgiving, 14 per cent. that they rejoined their friends, 13 per cent. that they gave up struggling when in the water and left it to others to save them, 9 per cent. that they swam ashore, 8 per cent. that they were helped to keep afloat by a lifebelt. They could no doubt be arranged in different classes according to the way in which they had escaped drowning, but the members of these classes would also have to be counted over again in one or more of the classes which testified that they were none the worse, or were restored to their friends, and some of them would also be able to say that they had taken part in the religious service. Further, the table makes a disappointingly meagre report as to what the converts conceived to be the content of the salvation which they had received. The persons giving evidence on this important point are only represented by two groups, making up 30 per cent. of the whole, and both belong to the class for which the essence of salvation consists in deliverance from the guilt of sin realised either as forgiveness or as union with God. A greater variety of experience would doubtless have been revealed at this point if the witnesses had been more fully interrogated, but the inference may also be drawn that the latter-day convert is an inferior religious subject, whose testimony as to the content of the conversion-experience needs to be richly supplemented from historical and biographical sources.

The manifoldness of the content had previously been emphasised by Höffding,[1] who, on the basis of a comparative view of the history of religious experience, suggested a list of six fundamental types. He describes them as varieties of religious faith, but his types actually fall into two well-marked groups

[1] *The Philosophy of Religion* (Eng. tr.), 1906, pp. 119 ff.

—according as they exemplify varieties of faith, or varieties of the blessings appropriated by faith. The kinds of faith which he distinguishes are confident boldness and the faith which rests on authority. The spiritual values distinguished as the special possession of different types are four—rest, self-development, a satisfying view of things as a whole and the spirit of resignation. The type of confident boldness, which Höffding illustrates by the faith of Luther, stands in a way for the evangelical experience of deliverance from guilt; the self-development type may be held to represent the experience of deliverance from the power of sin; and he made the important addition of recognising the two types whose chief impulse has been the desire for rest and the need of intellectual satisfaction, and a third by which resignation has been valued as the highest achievement of the spiritual life. On the other hand, the list is not too well arranged, and it is also defective. The distinctive evangelical experience is very inadequately described by a reference to the boldness of the faith which has accompanied it. It may also be observed that resignation is only one aspect of a general attitude which has found the highest good in conformity with the divine will, and which has combined the passive grace of resignation with the active grace of obedience to the positive requirements of God. To the list of fundamental types there falls to be added the emotional type of piety, commonly known as Mysticism, which has found its deepest satisfaction, as well as its strongest justification, in a love of God that is felt to be its own reward. The truth is that the motives leading to conversion, and the elements entering into the content of the experience, have been connected with every deep-seated need and aspiration which

serve as a normal and constant spring of the higher forms of human endeavour. Could we collect evidence from the universal company of those who have undergone a transformation that was entitled to be called a conversion, the collective testimony would be to the effect that the experience had distributed among them, at the least in the shape of earnest and promise, and in transfigured form, every kind of good which human nature desires, had stirred their deepest feelings to an accompaniment, if not of happiness, at least of peace of mind, had held their wills captive in a welcome servitude, and had flooded their universe, that had lain in darkness and under the shadow of death, with a bright and abiding light. There would also be evidence to the effect that the types which scientific analysis puts asunder have often been joined together in the concrete synthesis of character and life. Four of the types mentioned by Höffding, to take a conspicuous example, coalesced in the experience of Paul, who found in Christianity a salvation which, while bringing rest and self-development, with humble resignation to the will of God, also satisfied the needs of the mind by giving him a satisfying view of the totality of things and of man's place in the universe, and which, lest somewhat should yet be lacking, contained the assurance that all things were his, even as he was Christ's, and Christ was God's (1 Cor. iii. 22-23).

(*b*) The testimony of the converts, besides emphasising the variety of the blessings, has been given somewhat decisively on the question of their origin. They have generally rejected the notion that the change was attributable to self-effort, and have explained it as the effect of divine influence or a supernatural principle of grace. The four marks of conversion given by Professor Coe are that it is a profound change, that it

affects the attitudes which constitute the character and mode of life, that it involves emancipation or enlargement of the self, and that it seems not to be wrought by the subject but upon him.[1] It may at least be said that the conviction that conversion is not self-wrought has been that of the majority of those who have known the experience. There are three views as to the causal explanation which can be traced throughout the history of the higher religions—that the experience is exclusively the work of God, that it is due to co-operation between man and God, and that in it man works out his own salvation. The relation of the human will to the divine was much discussed in Hindu Schools, where the first two of the explanations have been picturesquely distinguished as the 'cat-hold theory,' and the 'monkey theory.' According to the former view 'a man has no more part in his salvation than the helpless kitten which the mother seizes by the nape of the neck,' while the latter represents him 'as the baby monkey which, when its mother takes it up to carry it to a place of safety, hangs on with all the strength of its little arms.'[2] The theory of salvation by self-effort was represented by Buddhism, and by those philosophical schools in which Pantheism passed over into Atheism. In the Christian Church the same three theories have been in frequent conflict under the names of Augustinianism, Semi-Pelagianism, and Pelagianism. There has also been an observable uniformity in the matter of their succession and ascendency, the doctrine of the exclusive efficacy of grace being congenial to the ages that were supported by elemental religious fervour, the doctrine of co-operation being favoured in the secondary

[1] *The Psychology of Religion*, 1921, p. 153.
[2] G. F. Moore, *History of Religion*, 1914, p. 337.

periods, while the theory that man saves himself has prevailed in decadent periods in which there has been least evidence that he was accomplishing the task. This cycle of thought has been traversed four times—first from Paul by way of the Greek fathers to Pelagius; a second time from Augustine by way of the Scholastics to the Humanists of the Renaissance; a third time from the Reformers by way of Arminianism and Socianism to the Deists of the eighteenth century; and lastly from the Evangelical Revival, with its earnest re-assertion of the Augustinian doctrines of grace, by way of the Synergism of modern Theology, to the confident Pelagianism of the many voices which have been raised in Philosophy and Psychology against the religious hypothesis of the ' psychological miracle.' It may also be observed that the Christian society has not only felt a renewed assurance of the reality of the subjective miracle whenever its spiritual life has been revived, but that whenever its judgment has been expressly challenged it has repudiated the Pelagian explanation, and has demanded that the Semi-Pelagian type of thought should be kept within narrow limits. It would also appear that this finding has been endorsed by the general body of converts. On this point Starbuck's evidence is of interest. The most valuable part of the table which was quoted is that which distinguishes the various attitudes of the will in conversion, and it goes to show that the types of explanation which have made so great a figure in Church history have a permanent basis in the impressions which converts form as to what is due to divine influence and how much to themselves. Two of Starbuck's groups testified to a spontaneous awakening or self-surrender, and these, who may be combined in a non-volitional class, had the experience which

forms the basis of the Augustinian tenets of prevenient and irresistible grace. A second class, which testified to a sense of divine aid, and a third, which declared that the experience followed upon conscious self-determination, might be counted as elucidating, one the Semi-Pelagian, the other the Pelagian position. The figures given are, for the combined non-volitional class, 37 per cent., for the synergistic, 8 per cent., for the purely volitional, 9 per cent.; and as in this case the calculations may be thought trustworthy, they show that there is popular support for the historic judgment of the Church as to the merits of the three classic types of explanation. The Church has dogmatically affirmed that the experience of regeneration is the result of an infusion of supernatural life and power; and it is remarkable that in a religious age which cannot be rated on the spiritual side as more than commonplace, it should still appear that the majority of those who have first-hand acquaintance with the matter have the conviction that the experience in which the soul finds God, and which is the starting-point of a higher life, is one which is effected, not by a subject who rallies the good in the depths of himself, but by a divine power by which he has been apprehended, moulded and transformed.

3. The saint may be defined in general terms as the utterly consecrated and devoted personality. If the convert, even when one-sided and immature, can claim esteem as so far an authentic and valuable spiritual product, the saint embodies the ideals and the spirit of a religion in a degree that approaches or satisfies its standard of perfection. Every religion has paid unique honour to those who are regarded as the ripest fruits or the chosen seed of its spiritual life, and the names given in many languages

to the members of this highest class have been held to be roughly equivalent to the term saint, with which the Christian Church has honoured those who have walked closely with God and have been filled with His fulness.[1] James emphasised the family likeness of saints of all creeds, and offered 'a composite photograph of universal saintliness.' His list of the common features is as follows :—' (1) A feeling of being in a wider life than that of this world's selfish little interests, and a conviction, not merely intellectual but as it were sensible, of the existence of an ideal power ; (2) a sense of the friendly continuity of the ideal power with our own life and a willing self-surrender to its control ; (3) an immense elation and freedom as the outlines of the confining selfhood melt down ; (4) a shifting of the emotional centre towards loving and harmonious affections, towards " yes, yes," and away from " no, no," where the claims of the non-ego are concerned.'[2] He adds as consequential features asceticism, strength of soul, purity and charity. This description of the marks of the saints might be reduced to a more systematic form: (*a*) attributes of piety—sense of the presence and of the love of God ($2^a$) ; (*b*) emotional experiences—joy ($3^a$), and peace ($4^b$) ; (*c*) attributes of virtue—self-abnegation ($4^c$), devotion or obedience ($2^b$), liberty ($3^b$) and love ($4^a$). This conception of the saint is, however, too wide for a universal application. The Confucian saint, the *sèng jên*, was a sage who reached a high

[1] The *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* contains studies of 'Saints and Martyrs' by different hands in ten fields, Buddhist, Chinese, Christian, Indian, Iranian, Japanese, Jewish, Mohammedan, Semitic and Egyptian, and Syrian. 'Art,' vol. xi.

[2] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 272, 273.

standard of mundane virtue, but whose relations with the divine could be confined to the observance of certain religious rites in accordance with the customs of his fathers. The primitive Buddhist saint exemplified self-surrender and obedience in a pre-eminent degree; but even when the idea of God is construed, as by James, in the most elastic fashion, it is impossible to credit him with the sense of the 'friendly continuity of the ideal' power which enters into the substance of his notion of saintliness. The truth is not only that an elevated idea of God is a presupposition of a sainthood worthy of the name, but that the content of the idea has vitally determined the saintly character. Sainthood does not exist under the sway of Animism and Polydaemonism; under Polytheism it has its prototypes, but the piety is that of the divided heart and its union with virtue is insecure; it dies out on the soil of Atheism; and it withers before the breath of those philosophical systems which admit of no real union and communion between the human and the divine. The two systems which have been most favourable to saintliness are Pantheism and Theism, and the fundamental types of sainthood are the pantheistic and the theistic, to which the Christian type has to be added as a special development and enrichment of the theistic species.

Pantheism and Theism have favoured and fostered saintliness in the two essential particulars that they have laid upon the mind a powerful constraint to see all things in God and think of all things in relation to God, and that they have similarly constrained the will to submit itself wholly to His disposal. But the differences are also as far-reaching as they are deep-seated between the piety of the theistic saints, with their faith in a God who is at once the Infinite Being

and a personal Spirit, and who, while Creator and Governor of the world, has yet conceded to the world of men and finite things a relative independence; and the piety of the pantheistic saints for whom there is 'one being and no second,' and for whom the plenitude of the divine perfections tends to be replaced by the darkness and the void of an unknown and unknowable ground of the universe. This fundamental contrast in the conception of the religious object and of the religious relationship has also carried in its train a number of secondary contrasts—the most notable being that while theistic religion has been bound up with the promise and the endeavour after a positive salvation, which included fulness of life and victory over the world with the promise of eternal life, pantheistic sainthood has been closely associated with a pessimistic valuation even of the highest goods of finite existence, and has encouraged the belief that the best that could happen to the world would be that it should be emancipated from its unresting toil and feverish strife, and that the best for the individual is that he should find repose in a dreamless sleep from which there would be no further awakening. Professor Heiler has contrasted mystical and prophetic religion as the chief types of sanctity. 'Those two types of piety,' he observes, 'spring from the same psychological root, and are based in the last resort on the same ideal conception: they are at one in the pursuit of purity of life, love, and blessedness, and in their faith in a supreme, absolute, transcendent Being in whom their yearnings find satisfaction. But the religion which affirms and that which negates personality, the experience of God which leans on history and that which dispenses with history, revelation and

ecstasy, prophetism and the way of the cloister, transformation of the world and flight from the world, evangelism and contemplation—these contrasts are too tremendous to permit of the identification of the two types, which are rather to be distinguished as the two poles of the higher piety.'[1] The distinction between mystical and prophetic religion is real and important, and has been met with in both East and West; but on the whole it may be said that the synthesis of principles to which Heiler gives the name of mystical religion is that which Pantheism has normally effected, and that similarly his synthesis of the elements of prophetic religion is that which has usually been effected under the inspiration of the theistic faith. Whether the theistic or the pantheistic saint has been in the right in his theological presupposition is the supreme issue that emerges on a general view of the history of religion, and the only question which is of equal moment is whether the faith of either is well founded.

The ideal of saintliness was developed by Christianity into a richer combination of gracious elements —the fresh impulse being given by the addition to the theistic doctrine of the faith of the Incarnation. Jesus Christ, who was worshipped as God manifest in the flesh, and as uniting in His person the divine nature with the human, and who as the Son was knit to the Father by the bonds of a perfect love and by the service of a perfect obedience, represented the distinctive elements of sanctity in the highest conceivable degree. Jesus Christ was proposed as an example to His brethren, and from Him there went forth a virtue that created saints after His image. The general character of the mind of the saint, according

[1] *Das Gebet*, [4], 1921, p. 283.

to Thomas Aquinas, is that it habitually directs itself to God, and that not only in religious duties but in the whole range of life.[1] The two special notes are *munditia* and *firmitas*. The thesis of Fénelon in a once famous book was that saintliness has as its characteristic and indispensable feature 'love to God alone without any the least mixture of an interested motive either of fear or of hope'—a pure and disinterested love which would cling to God in gratitude and devotion even if He had not promised the gift of eternal life.[2] The official pronouncement of the Roman Catholic Church presupposes orthodox faith and lays the stress on heroic virtue and endurance to the end. 'For the canonisation of a servant of God,' says Benedict XIV., 'it suffices that it be proven that the person has practised in a pre-eminent and heroic degree the virtues which occasion offered him according to his condition, his rank and his personal estate.' To this was added the requirement of signs accompanying. 'As many as underwent martyrdom for Christ's sake, and after their death became illustrious through signs or miracles; as many as after the laudable exercise of heroic virtues died a death which was precious in the sight of God, and after their death were resplendent with the glory of miracles—these are the objects of canonisation.'[3] The treatment of sainthood in the older Protestant period was largely polemical—being directed against the practice of canonisation as a usurpation of the judicial rights of God, the alleged miracles of the lives of the saints, and above all against the adoration of the saints; but also as a matter of course Protestantism

[1] *Summa Theologica*, ii. 2, q. 81. 8.
[2] *Maxims of the Saints* (Eng. tr.), 1698, pp. 7, 8.
[3] *Opera*, 1839; *De Servorum Dei Beatificatione*, i. 14, iii. 21.

has venerated the higher degrees of sanctification, with which it has been familiar in the union with Christ and devotion to the will of God.

The essential elements of saintliness are close communion with God and assimilation to the likeness of God. Emphasis has also been justly laid, as by Fénelon and James, on the eclipse of self and the joy of self-annihilating service. The types of religious experience which have been distinguished as finding the supreme good in obedience to God, and in the love of God, have been chiefly exemplified in the schools of the saints, and they also have contributed a certain proportion of the thinkers for whom the possession of light has been a large part, if not the essence, of the highest good that is won through union with God. But sainthood has represented the highest degree or perfection of all religious types, not exclusive preference for any one, and it would be unjust to rule out from the holy family those who have recognised the claims of the self in respect that they have rejoiced in their religion as a provision for the salvation of their own souls. It is quite true that no claim of sainthood could be made for any whose piety and virtue had their sole spring in the hope of escaping the torments of Hell and attaining the eternal joys of Heaven; but the essence of salvation has been understood by spiritual persons to consist in communion with God and in sanctification, and the attainment of these things may equally be described as the climax of self-realisation or of self-annihilation. Certain it is that many who have been revered as among the greatest of the saints, including the greatest in the field of what has been called prophetic religion, have dwelt with adoring gratitude on the gift of salvation, and have put this in the forefront of their message

to the world. Only, as Fénelon observed, they thought of God first and last, and could even think chiefly of their own salvation from the point of view that it redounded to the glory of God.

The saint who, in the ages of unquestioning faith, had been advanced to semi-divine honours, was brought down by the eighteenth-century Enlightenment to the low estate of a fanatic, and the medical science of last century threatened to degrade him to the still lower estate of the neurotic and the epileptic. This work of profanation has practically ceased, and the saint has come near to being reinstated in his former dignity by a generation of seekers whose interest has been aroused in the intellectual equipment of the saint, and in the peculiar workings of the God-filled and God-intoxicated mind, and which has groaned under the burden and the bondage of its negations, or has grown contemptuous of itself and of its own poor stock of half-beliefs. There is a growing disposition to re-adopt the traditional view, that the class of the saints is entitled at the least to a co-ordinate rank with the other classes which the world has decided to call great. It is recognised that religious genius is a true form of genius, and that sanctity is a sublime kind of heroism. The saints may well be reckoned among the great ones of the earth, since their achievement has been one which men are generally agreed in thinking impossible—to overcome the forces of selfishness, sensuality and worldliness which are rooted so deeply in the constitution of human nature, and to be filled with the spirit whose habit is to think and will in terms of God and of other selves. And what makes the achievement more impressive is that on the one hand it has not been dependent on special favouring circum-

stances of natural endowment, time and environment, and that on the other, in contrast with the tendency of the intellectual powers to decay, saintliness tends to go from strength to strength, and to shine most brightly when infirmities multiply and the King of Terrors is at the door.[1] The saints fall into two divisions—the humbler class whose greatness consisted in what they were, and the exalted class whose members had the additional elements of grandeur that they combined saintliness with lofty talent or genius, and that they have exercised a vast influence over mankind. The influence of the saints who may be called the spiritual masters—those who founded, re-formed or re-vitalised the spiritual and ethical religions of the world—is indeed one of the miracles of history. For while they had much reason to say of the common stuff of humanity, 'My ways are not your ways, nor my thoughts your thoughts,' and while at their appearing men ignored them, then mocked them, and proceeded to stone or to crucify them, the *via dolorosa* proved to be the way to a throne, and they became dictators to nations and races in the matter of what they were to believe concerning God and their own destiny, and the duties which God requires of man. This which holds of prophets and apostles in general has been made a commonplace for the western world in the story of Jesus Christ. And at least part of the explanation is that sainthood, when the first surprise has been overcome, compels the recognition by man of that which the witness of his soul acknowledges as the manifestation of a realm of divine holiness and beauty which towers high above his commonplace world.

[1] Joly, *Psychologie des Saints*, 1920, chap. i.

II

Social Psychology has drawn attention to various groups, and classified them on different principles. Dr. M'Dougall distinguishes three main classes—the fortuitous and ephemeral, the natural and the artificial. The fortuitous is represented by the crowd which gathers in a street to watch a house on fire. The natural group is of two kinds—that which, like the family, is rooted in kinship, and that which, like the population of an island, is geographically determined. The artificial groups are of three classes—the purposive, illustrated by the social club and the philanthropic association; the traditional, illustrated by the Hindu caste-system; and the mixed, which is determined by tradition, but is also marked by conscious purpose as well as by a lively self-consciousness. The mixed form, we are told, has its greatest example in the Christian Church.[1] Dr. Drever has proposed an alternative classification based on the distinctive character of the mental attitude assumed by the various groups. The psychological criterion, he finds, yields three main types—the crowd, which has its bond of unity in the perception of some object or event that attracts its interest; the club, which is constituted for the furtherance of some definite purpose; and the community, which possesses continuous mental life, pursues common ends, and makes a provision for promoting the self-realisation of its members. The nation has passed through the perceptive stage when it was technically a crowd, the ideational stage at which it had the limited outlook and programme of a club, and as it has developed

[1] *The Group Mind*, 1921, p. 92.

in civilised form it has risen to the rational level of the many-sided community. The notes which are ascribed to the highest type of social group are continuity of existence, group self-consciousness, interaction with other groups, and group-organisation.[1] This list of notes might have been collected from an examination of the history and life of the Christian Church, and the only considerable addition which would fall to be made is that the Church has been irresistibly impelled to give expression to its self-consciousness in creeds and confessions, and that it has proposed to its members an end so comprehensive as to include the blessings of eternity along with a partial realisation in time of a Kingdom of God.

The social group behaves as if it were a distinct individual, with a character that is other than the sum or the average of the qualities of its component members, and also with well-marked habitudes of thought, feeling, and action. It has therefore become a popular usage to speak of the soul or spirit of a nation; and serious thinkers have maintained that the group possesses a collective mind which, while rooted in some real fashion in the particular minds of its component members, does thinking and willing of an independent kind, and is able to make its ideas and its aims effectively known by way of inspiration or suggestion. Wundt, however, guards himself against being supposed to teach that there is in the background a mind which is other than the sum of the interacting individual minds. 'There is no sufficient evidence,' says Professor Alexander, 'that such a mind exists. It is but a short symbol for that co-operation and conflict of

[1] *The Psychology of Education*, 1922, chap. xi., 'The Social Group.'

many minds which produces standards of approval and disapproval.'[1] Dr. M'Dougall adduces impressive arguments in support of the other view, and, though he decides against it, he qualifies his rejection of the collective hypothesis as provisional.[2] The unwillingness to concede the existence of a collective mind is somewhat surprising, since from the empirical point of view mind or soul is merely a convenient name for a system of psychical occurrences, and it might be thought that the larger system of the group has as good a claim as the smaller system which we call a human being to the benefit of the term.

Some groups are held to be inferior, some superior to their individual components. The inferiority is marked in the case of the crowd, which merely owes its unity to an immediate concrete interest. In many respects it is more of a child than a man ; it is swayed by its feelings ; it is influenced by suggestion more than by argument ; it laughs at very elemental forms of wit and humour ; it is fickle, though disposed to welcome decisive action ; it is very impatient of unpalatable truth ; its sympathies are easily touched, when it is capable of great generosity and even self-sacrifice, and on the other hand, its mind is readily swept by gusts of fear and wrath, when it will hardly shrink from any form of injustice and cruelty.[3] It can, however, be added that, except when strongly moved by passion or self-interest, the deliberating crowd can commonly be depended on for a majority-finding which is marked by good sense, and also pays respect to the principle of fair dealing. The group which is

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, ii. p. 221.

[2] *The Group Mind*, p. 39.

[3] Le Bon, *Psychologie des Foules*, [9], 1905 ; Flugge, 'Die Psychologie der Massen,' *Preuss. Jahrbücher*, March 1921.

technically defined as the club often serves for the intellectual stimulus and enlightenment of its members; but as its aim may be limited to the pursuit of some form of recreation, or of pecuniary profit, its influence is to narrow the moral outlook and to commend the maxim that self-interest is the proper criterion of action. The community is decidedly the intellectual superior of its ordinary members. It would be absurd to say that the average man or woman has an opinion which is of the slightest value upon the great political and economic issues which may be submitted to a democratic electorate, but it is not necessary to despair of a system that has given so much power to ignorant and incompetent individuals, as there is ground for supposing that the collective mind in some way takes a grasp of a grave situation, and in any case responds to good leadership. The collective mind also seems to realise keenly the necessity of making provision through education and otherwise for transmitting its accumulated knowledge and wisdom from generation to generation, and so far as possible making them common property. The moral superiority of the community has been thought to be more doubtful. Nations, it is observed, are determined by considerations of self-interest to a degree which the good man would be ashamed to imitate even amid the stress and the temptations of competitive business, and the religious community has been much upbraided with taking as the habitual principle of corporate action the defence and advancement of its special ecclesiastical interests. On the other hand, it is undeniable that the spirit of a nation has often recalled its citizens from the selfish pursuit of profit, pleasure and ease, and has not only taught them to appreciate ideals, but has evoked a mighty

volume of unpaid labours and of uncompensated sacrifices in the maintenance of ideal causes. The Church habitually fulfils the invaluable ethical function of making familiar to the everyday world the standards of a moral order in which there is a revision or a reversal of worldly values, and in which manifold enterprises are carried out for the simple reason that they are required by duty, or prompted by the love of man. The attitude of the social groups towards religion has naturally varied widely in accordance with the narrower or wider range of the aims which they proposed to themselves. The ' crowd ' type, in view of its temporary character, and the ' club ' type, in view of its limited purpose, have usually treated religion as an irrelevant concern. The community, on the other hand, has constituted itself the custodian and guardian of religious interests. This office has often been undertaken by the nation, and it has been the chief function of the religious community or Church. And both have relied much on the family, whose contribution amply merits a separate study.

1. The natural group, as represented by the tribe, dominates religion on the plane of the lower culture. It was also the most influential religious subject at the stage of developed Polytheism, which bore the impress of the collective mind of a nation equally with its language and its Art. With the appearance of the great religions the nations came under the domination of prophetic personalities, and of the beliefs and practices which were supported by their authority, but the natural group still reserved the right to value, and to some extent to revise, a higher religion from its own point of view. The nation has a capacity for recognising the highest when it is flashed upon it in its native splendour,

but its deep-seated bent is to take counsel and to devise means for preserving and augmenting its own earthly well-being. And the nation has largely valued and administered religion in this self-regarding interest. Its working criterion of the worth of a religion has been its actual or supposed serviceableness to the State, and in enforcing this principle it has had a considerable hand in shaping the events of religious history. Amenhotep IV. was an early apostle of ethical Monotheism, and in the first instance it would appear that Egypt was with him, but a reaction followed which was partly due to the fact that the interests of the priesthood had suffered, but still more to the fact that after the reformation, and, as it must have seemed to the general mind, because of an apostasy, provinces were lost to the empire and Egypt fell into confusion. The ever-recurring backslidings of the children of Israel, when they went after the Baalim and the Ashtaroth, are partly explained by the circumstance that the heathen divinities lowered the demands of the moral code and allowed the worshippers their fill of licence and laughter, but the weightier reason doubtless was that they were supposed to have more understanding of agriculture than the God of battles, and in any case could be depended on, as Jahveh could not, to say, 'my country right or wrong.' If Roman emperors persecuted the Church and thereafter established it, it was mainly on the strength of the diverse judgments which they formed as to whether Christianity was injurious or profitable to the commonwealth. When in the fifth century of our era the Roman Empire was overthrown and dissolved by the northern barbarian hordes, the Italian mind was disposed to think that a mistake had been made by Rome in renouncing her ancient gods,

and there was a tendency to revert to paganism as giving a better pledge of security. The medieval rulers, in giving the Church a civil establishment, were influenced by the belief that Christ and the saints had a hand in victories and defeats, but probably still more by the consideration that the Christian religion supported the cause of law and order, and that the Church was the great school for the inculcation of the cardinal virtues which are of vital importance to the home and the State. Since the French Revolution the modern States have increasingly disclaimed any interest in religion, and any responsibility for its maintenance, and the material support which was formerly given to the Church has been transferred, with ever-increasing liberality, to the support of education and public health, and of the works of secular philanthropy. In friendly justification of the change of attitude it could be said that modern societies are hopelessly divided in religious opinions, or again that religion has shown itself to be entirely capable of evoking its own means of support, but probably the deepest reason was that the civil magistrate no longer felt the same confidence as of old that religion makes a palpable contribution to the safety and the material well-being of the commonwealth. In the Middle Ages it was a convincing argument for a nation becoming Christian that it thereby entered the pale of civilisation, while modern States attach much less importance to a profession of Christianity as evidence of a civilised status than to the development of a powerful army or a first-class fleet. At the same time it remains the general conviction of the representatives of the cultivated Western mind that the Church deserves profound respect as a nursery of morality.

2. The ecclesiastical community, in the nature of the case, has filled a more important rôle, especially in Christian times, as a religious subject. It shares the self-regarding instinct, but, since a Church reckons among its interests the successful discharge of a spiritual and humanitarian vocation, the religious community naturally lives and moves on a higher ethical plane than the nation. When it is accused of self-seeking in the matter of the worldly goods of wealth, power and honour, it may be said that, even when the charge was supported by good evidence, it was an extenuating circumstance that it was believed that the best thing that could happen to a nation was that the Church should be strengthened for its spiritual mission by the possession of additional talents which increased its power over the world and commanded its regard. The collective mind of the religious community has served as its organ of self-expression and self-affirmation in three principal ways—by formulating its beliefs in creeds and confessions, by ordering its worship, and by organising the various forms of service, missionary and philanthropic, which were dictated by its programme of service to God and man. In its defensive measures it has shown much passion—engaging in polemics with proverbial heat, and readily resorting to violence, but it is very intelligible that toleration did not soon or easily commend itself to a spiritual society which held truth to be the food of souls and heresy to be deadly poison. In administering its trust the religious community has naturally felt itself to have an authority in spiritual matters which was paramount over that of the natural community, and has claimed autonomy or freedom; and this claim, which in former times was the source of bitter conflicts

with the political community, which equally asserted its competence in the field, has been generally conceded since the State came to think that it could not derive much profit from interfering in religious matters, or suffer much harm from leaving them alone. The collective mind of the religious society has also been the zealous custodian of the sacred deposit, dwelling with affectionate piety on the memories of the golden ages of the beginnings and the revivals, and rejoicing in the glories of their miraculous setting. It was on its initiative that collections of sacred literature were formed, and by its judgment that books were given the canonical stamp. It has besides found infinite joy in embellishing the ecclesiastical heritage, on the one hand by giving play to its imagination in legend, poetry and picture, on the other by rearing fabrics with characters of matchless grandeur and beauty, which, in conjunction with solemn and stately rites, could not only suggest but to some extent body forth the beauties and the solemnities of a heavenly world.

The contemporary schools of Religious Psychology are mainly distinguished by the preference which they have shown for one or other of the above-named varieties of the religious subject. The member of our list that has been least favoured is man as man—though it may be said that the omission has been so far repaired by the anthropologists, whose laborious researches in the realm of primitive culture were in part inspired by the belief that in the savage we have the clearest view of the fundamental and permanent elements of human nature. The American School, as we have seen, pitched upon the convert as the most interesting and instructive figure of the religious sphere. Workers

of different nationalities have reinvestigated by preference the equipment and the experience of the saints. The German School of Wundt and the French School of Durkheim, following the lead of the English anthropological school, have magnified the importance of the social group in the origination and the development of religion. Nor does this exhaust the list of preferences. The French investigators gave most attention, in the first stage of their inquest, to the pathological subject, while in Britain and America a special study has been made of the religion of the child. And it is obvious that each of these subjects is important, that the fullest examination of the characteristics of each is called for, and that each has a contribution of which some use will be made in the perfected system of the Psychology of Religion. But there will still remain a question as to which subject is to be regarded as most important, and as having a title to be in some sense normative for religious life and thought.

In the individual series there can be no doubt that the order of the ascending scale is the human being, the convert and the saint. Starbuck was right in diverting attention from the human being as such to the converted or regenerated man. But also the later workers were in the right who have maintained that unheroic modern examples of Christians and half-Christians are much less worth examining than the great figures of religious history, and that much richer sources than those which are tapped even by a satisfactory questionnaire are available in the confessions and the testimonies of the saints, and in the sacred books of the higher religions. It may be thought that there should be little hesitation in deciding whether greater importance attaches to the natural community of the tribe or nation, or to the so-called

artificial group of the religious community. The natural group, especially in the form of the primitive tribe, has a special interest for a generation which has been impelled by the evolutionary doctrine to speculations on the problems of origin, but it can only be a passing fashion that the student of religion should devote his attention to the lower rather than to the higher levels of spiritual aspiration and achievement, and find matter more attractive and valuable in the ideas and practices of the Australian aborigines and the Andaman Islanders than in the Indian philosophical schools and in the doctrinal systems of the Scholastics, the Reformers and the Puritans, not to speak of the Creeds and Confessions in which the Church defined its faith.

The final question is whether precedence is to be given to the saint as the supreme individual subject, or to the religious community as the highest form of the collective subject. In the great religions these have been the formative and guiding factors, and the history of religion, in many of its most interesting chapters, is the history of their conflicts. The antithesis between the original deposit of faith and its interpretation by the collective mind of a school has been a constant feature of the religion of India. Islam has the Sunni Sect, which accepts the Sunnah or traditional law as having concurrent authority with the Koran, the Shias, with their special body of traditions, and the Wahabis, whose object was 'to sweep away all later innovations, and to return to the original purity of Islam, as based upon the exact teaching of the Koran, and the example of Mahomet.'[1] Israel had the writings of the prophets for its inspiration, and for its theology and the

[1] Stobart, *Islam and its Founder*, 1901, pp. 197 ff.

practical guidance of life it had the instruction of the Rabbinical schools. The Christian Church was rent in twain in the sixteenth century over the question as to whether the standard of faith and morals is a self-interpreting Bible containing the teachings of Christ and His apostles, or an ecclesiastical interpretation of Scripture and an oral tradition which have been entrusted to the accredited organ of the infallible Church. On the issue which has thus been debated in a world-wide and persistent controversy the natural verdict is that the saintly prophetic personality stands above the religious community. For the ideal Church, formerly called the invisible Church, it is hardly possible to make too great claims. But the empirical or visible Church has grave limitations. It has a rich endowment of reverence and devotion, it has laboured unweariedly in the development and the defence of the truths committed to its trust, it has given much evidence of practical sense in its efforts to bring its message and its principles into effective relation with human souls and the general life of humanity, and it has done missionary and philanthropic work for the world in the spirit of Christ which ranks as one of the great moral achievements of the race; but it does not lie in its vocation to rival on the intellectual side the intuitions of the prophet, any more than it has been given it to reproduce in its character and spirit, without much earthly alloy, the holiness of the saint.

# CHAPTER III

## RELIGION AND THE INSTINCTS

AMONG the wonders of our world which custom does not stale is the power so conspicuously operating in the lower creatures to which we give the name of instinct. The marvel is that animals, birds, fishes, and not least insects, while so glaringly inferior to the rational and ethical subject, and seemingly existing for his uses, nevertheless do things in so skilful and prudent a fashion as often to leave man with the impression that by comparison with them he is a groper and a bungler. In olden times this was so keenly felt that species of animals were worshipped as the most palpably sacred objects; and when Totemism decayed, such creatures as the lion, the bull, the eagle and the serpent retained their position as the best available symbols of the power and the wisdom, if not of the beneficence, of the Divine Being. In recent times the wonders of instinct have been realised afresh, and have been found equally interesting by the biologist, the psychologist, the metaphysician and the theologian. There has been much patient study of the operation of instinct in the works of bees and ants and of the higher mammals, followed by much discussion of how the useful attribute was evolved. Psychology has distinguished and analysed the instincts, arranged them in elaborate classifications, and investigated their function in the behaviour of individuals and of social groups. Philosophy has

been constitutionally disposed to distrust and despise instinct as inimical to rational thinking no less than to ethical conduct, but in the recent reaction against intellectualism this prejudice has been challenged. Theology was accustomed to cite instinct as giving evidence of a divine power and wisdom, and has seen in newer developments of the doctrine some additional sanctions for religious faith. In this chapter, after an introductory view of the subject, we shall discuss the four instincts to which religion has most strongly and constantly appealed, and examine the case for the existence of a specifically religious instinct; and thereafter we shall touch on the metaphysical implications of the phenomenon.

## I

It is agreed that there are natural tendencies which are to be called instincts, and that there is a mode of behaviour which is to be called instinctive, but there is much difference of opinion as to the precise meaning of the terms.[1] At the outset of his discussion of the subject, Dr. M'Dougall remarks on the hopeless laxity with which the terms are used, 'even by cultured authors, with the effect of disguising from the writer the obscurity and incoherence of his thought.'[2] It might, however, be retorted by the average person that when he spoke of instinct, he had in mind a traditional doctrine which had been carefully worked out and was easy to understand, and that he did not find that the psychologist and the biologist had replaced this by another doctrine which was equally definite and

[1] For a history of the doctrine of instinct, see Drever, *Instinct in Man*, 1921, chaps. ii., iii.

[2] *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, [15], 1920, p. 21.

intelligible, and which they were at one in commending for popular acceptance. In the older period instinct was usually contrasted with reason, and that in regard to the manner of its working and its sphere of influence. Instinctive behaviour, in the first place, had the three notes of blindness, mechanical necessity and unerring efficiency. It was blind—the agent having no prevision of an end or any purpose of attaining it. It was impelled by a mechanical necessity which in its rigidity served as a foil to the plasticity that is shown in the contrivances and the experiments of the reasoning intelligence. And it worked with unerring efficiency in the interests of the individual and especially of the species—avoiding the failures which so often attend on the ventures of the consciously purposive intelligence. Further, instinct was supposed to be the principle of action in the animals, while reason was the monopoly of man as the crown of the terrestrial creation. But this scheme of doctrine has been rudely shaken and largely disintegrated. While for James it was one of the essential moments of the definition that it is 'the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends without foresight of the ends,'[1] M'Dougall emphasises that instinctive action can be accompanied by 'awareness of the end towards which it tends.'[2] The two other specified notes, it is said, have been much exaggerated. 'Exact observations on animals,' says Rivers, 'have shown that their reactions to their surroundings have not the rigid and mechanical character which was once ascribed to them. Not only do failures occur in the adjustment of action to circumstance, but when those failures occur, or when the conditions are such as would lead to failure if the reactions took their

[1] *Textbook of Psychology*, 1904, p. 391. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 31.

ordinary form, animal behaviour has been found to be capable of modification.' The conclusion was also reached that the animals have a large share of intelligence, and that man, popularly conceived as the rational animal, is largely under the dominion of instinct. 'On the one hand,' says Rivers, 'it has been found that the behaviour of animals shows many features, such as adaptability to unusual conditions, which can only be explained by qualities of the same order as those belonging to intelligence. On the other hand, we have learnt that the behaviour of man is far less subject to reason and intelligence than was supposed, and that his reactions to circumstance are often with difficulty to be distinguished from the behaviour of the unreasoning brutes.'[1] 'While there are still great differences of opinion,' says Dr. M'Dougall, 'as to the place of instinct in the human mind, the view propounded by Schneider and James has rapidly gained ground that man has at least as many instincts as the animals, and that they have a leading part in determining human conduct and mental process.'[2] 'On the old view,' says Dr. Drever, 'the chief psychological problem of human behaviour came to be to explain how it was possible for men sometimes to act unreasonably. The true psychological problem is to explain how they ever came to act reasonably.'[3]

Of the issues thus raised the most important from the present point of view are the question as to the nature of instinct, and the range of its influence over men. As regards the former, it may be thought that some recent writers have blurred the characteristics of instinct, and that there remains a distinction between instinct and

[1] *Instinct and the Unconscious*, [2], 1922, p. 39. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 23.
[3] *The Psychology of Everyday Life*, 1921, p. 21.

reason which was more justly appreciated by common sense. The difference between instinct and reason is sometimes reduced to the circumstance that one is innate and the other acquired. 'If an animal or man,' says Rivers, 'behaves in a certain way which is quite independent of any experience it can have acquired in its individual existence, the behaviour is regarded as purely instinctive. If on the other hand it were possible to say that the behaviour of an animal or man was wholly determined by the experience of the individual, we should say that the behaviour of the animal or man was purely intelligent. Since, however, it is impossible to exclude innate factors, all that we can do is to recognise as intelligent those components of behaviour which can be ascribed to individual experience.'[1] Yet surely there is more in the antithesis of instinct and intelligence than the antithesis of nature and nurture. Experience contributes matter for intelligence to work on, and promotes its development, but intelligence is an independent principle. Rivers's definition is so wide that it would require us to say that a horse which had been broken in was intelligent though it might be a very stupid horse, and even that an apple-tree became intelligent when it had been pruned and trained to a garden wall, inasmuch as 'components of its behaviour' were to be ascribed to its individual experience. Before a child is credited with intelligence something more is required than that its natural propensities have been modified by an education in the home and the school. The additional element surely consists in a mobility and resourcefulness which, in contrast with the repetition of actions that have been learned, are shown by looking at and doing things in

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

new ways. This vital point of contrast was lucidly stated by Dr. Lloyd Morgan: 'Novelty of the adjustment,' he has said, 'and the individuality displayed in these adjustments, seem to be the essential features of intelligent activities. The ability to perform acts in special adaptation to special circumstances, the power of exercising individual choice between contradictory promptings, and the individuality or originality manifested in dealing with the complex conditions of an ever-changing environment—these seem to be the distinctive features of intelligence. On the other hand, in instinctive actions there seems to be no choice; the organism is impelled to their performance through impulse as by a stern necessity; they are so far from novel that they are performed by every individual of the species, and have been so performed by their ancestors for generations; and, in performing the instinctive action, the animal seems to have no more individuality or originality than a piece of adequately wound clockwork.'[1]

For the purposes of our discussion we may accept the general account of the nature of instinct given by M'Dougall, with which Drever substantially agrees. He defines it as 'an inherited or innate psychophysical disposition which determines its possessor to perceive, and to pay attention to, objects of a certain class, to experience an emotional excitement of a certain quality upon perceiving such an object, and to act in regard to it in a particular manner, or at least to experience an impulse to such action.'[2] This definition lays stress on the notes of innateness and mechanical determination, and it has also the merit of giving due prominence to the psycho-

[1] *Animal Life and Intelligence*, 1891, p. 458.
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

logical as compared with the biological aspect of instinct, and of doing justice to the combination and inter-relation of the cognitive and the affective with the conative elements. As regards the rôle of instinct in man there are good grounds for saying that the newer psychological school is in the right in declaring that 'man has at least as many instincts as the animals,' and in magnifying the importance of the part which they play in every department of the individual and the collective life. Man is the rational animal, but he is so described in terms of his destiny rather than of his actual condition. Those who desire to get a doctrine believed, or to procure support for a good cause, must also know how to make the truth appear to be true and the cause appear to be good, and this implies the winning of sympathy and the raising of reinforcements from the instinctive elements of the human constitution. Politicians have their principles which they believe to be rational and salutary, but it is difficult to win a General Election unless these principles are set forth in concrete applications which make an arresting appeal—it may be to the danger-instinct, or the tendency to repose, or the instinct of pugnacity, or the constructive instinct, or the acquisitive instinct. And even then the decisive factor may prove to be the feeling that time about is fair play. That individuals, and not least the crowd and the community, are to be managed through their instincts, has been known from of old to kings and statesmen, propagandists and organisers, and also to those who have held the mirror up to human nature in the epic, the drama and the novel. The state of the case was specially appreciated by the great orators of antiquity, and by the thinkers who developed the Art of Rhetoric —which latter consists to a large extent in a study of

the instincts, and of the methods by which they may be stimulated and directed. And while many have consciously explored and exploited the field, it is as if religion had utilised, though without calculated effort, the same psychological knowledge; for it has been able to play upon the instincts with the hand of a master who had something to reveal to Shakespeare of the secrets of the human heart, and something to teach Aristotle and Cicero about the means of persuasion.

The catalogue of the instincts given by modern psychologists is large, and additions are constantly being made to the list. The schemes are so elaborate as to leave an impression of bewilderment, and they are at least useful for enforcing the lesson that a dominating religious or ethical principle is needed to take the situation in hand if the soul is not to become a scene of chronic strife and miserable anarchy. The instincts are usually classified according as they work in the interests of the individual or of the species, or in the interests of both. A distinction has also been drawn between the general tendencies and the specialised forms which have these as their roots. Many of the members of this large and varied body have been sensitive to the call of religion and have been impressed into its service, and there are in particular four which have responded to the call with such conspicuous eagerness and energy that they may serve to denominate as many fundamental types of religious experience.

## II

Religion has made a strong and constant appeal to the general instinct which stands at the head of the self-regarding group, and which may be said to embody the

self-centred spirit. This general tendency may be called the instinct of self-affirmation. It is popularly known as the instinct of self-preservation, but a wider term is needed which comprchends along with the static moment of self-protection the dynamic moment of self-expansion. On the negative side this tendency endeavours after self-preservation in the strict sense—branching out into a number of specialised instincts, which serve to protect the individual against hostile forces, and to supply it with the provision that is needed to maintain it in its existing state of being and wcll-being. On the positive side it strives for the aggrandisement of the self, giving rise to a second group of specialised instincts which are directed to the enhancement of the well-being of the individual and the advancement of his interests. And it may be said that the most conspicuous and constant feature in the history of religion, especially as prcsented to and apprehended by the masses of humanity, has been the way in which the religious message has awakened this general self-regarding instinct and engaged its sympathy and support. The religious forms in which this spirit has been predominant constitute thc salvation-type of experience.

1. (*a*) The self-regarding tendency is most prominently represented on the negative or the defensive side by the danger-instinct. This is stimulated by sights and sounds, especially the unfamiliar, which threaten injury. The attendant emotion is fear. Thc reaction may take the form of escaping from the danger by flight or conccalmcnt, or by resort to immobility (which is also a way of concealment), or by positivc methods of frustration. Fear has entered deeply into religion, and that in two ways : it has been inspired by the divine object in whose existence

the worshipper has believed, and it has been inspired by the cloud of menaces and terrors which hangs over the life of man, and which has impelled him to seek the protection of higher powers. Fear inspired by the religious object is the prevailing feeling under Animism and Polydaemonism. At the polytheistic stage the popular cult has not seldom been that which was directed to the propitiation of the most hideous and malignant divinities. In the Old Testament the name for religion is the fear of the Lord. The Christian religion also contains many things that have struck terror into the human heart—God in His unutterable majesty and in His wrath against sin, the principalities and powers of darkness, the vision of the Day of Judgment, the punishments of Purgatory and Hell, and the spiritual hell of the sin-possessed and God-forsaken soul. On the other hand religion was welcomed by man as a means of vanquishing the terrors that are bound up with the general conditions of his terrestrial existence. In this world man finds himself in a situation in which he is constantly threatened with loss, injury and even destruction by manifold forces that are beyond his control—by nature in its violent or grudging moods of fire, flood and tempest, of drought and famine, by ravening beasts and lurking serpents, by the power and cunning of human foes, by sickness and disease, and by the inevitable stroke and catastrophe of death. The human being is, in fact, like a hunted creature, pursued by a host of enemies that would despoil him of all that he holds dear—friends and kin, goods and gear, honour and power, the gains of mind and soul, yea and his own life also. And it is a just observation that man in religion has hoped to supplement the means which nature placed at his disposal for coping with the particular problems of the grim situation by

casting himself on the protection of a being or beings clothed with a greater power than the menacing and wasting forces, and which can be depended on to put forth their power for the conservation of all the possessions which he values and loves, or at least of those which have a good title to be saved from destruction. While man has by nature a fear of God, he has an even greater fear of the world and of its power to hurt, and this has thrown him into the arms of God—even as a bird, when hard pressed by an enemy, is observed to overcome its natural dread of man, and to turn to him for protection against the more aggressive and dangerous foe. Dr. M'Dougall has raised the question, 'to what extent the lapse from orthodox religious observances is due to the general softening of religious teaching, to the lapse of the doctrine of divine retribution to a very secondary position, and to the discredit into which the flames of Hell have fallen.'[1] He is right in connecting the two observations, and the pulpit may be to blame for not making it clearer that, apart from an eternal Hell, there are terrors enough in life and in the harvest to which it ripens.

These two forms of fear, now, have been accompanied in religion by the same forms of reaction which are familiar in other fields. When the object of fear has been the Divine Being itself, there has been an endeavour to escape by flight—as exemplified by the prohibition to touch sacred objects, or the warning to flee from the presence of God; to escape by concealment—as in resort to sacrifice for the purpose of 'covering' the guilty person or his guilt; above all, to escape by the method of frustration as in the animistic policy of outwitting and baffling the ghosts and demons, or in the widespread employ-

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 312.

ment of sacrifice as a means of placating an incensed Deity and transforming him into a friend. When the dreaded object—the more normal presupposition—has been the world and its manifold powers of danger and destruction, the measures taken have followed the same lines of reaction. God has been welcomed as 'a refuge from the storm and a covert from the tempest,' or as a deliverer who hides the fugitive 'in the secret of his pavilion.' At the highest the divine power has been confidently relied on as able to confound the counsels and to frustrate the assaults of every hostile power, whether things present or things to come, which threatens the soul with bondage, impoverishment and suffering, or with any other evils that are the elements or harbingers of death.

There is a rest-instinct which works towards a similar result. Sleep is included by Drever among the specific 'appetite tendencies,'[1] and there is undoubtedly an impulse towards repose which asserts itself in many diverse spheres of experience. It has affinities with the instinct of self-protection. In the religious sphere deliverance from danger, whether as the result of flight or of frustration, is often described in terms of rest or repose. There may be such a sense of the oppressiveness of life—with its burden of heavy and monotonous toil, its thronging cares and anxieties, its clamorous wants, above all with the chronic and humiliating solicitations to evil that come from the side of the world and the flesh—that it may seem that there is nothing better for a man than that he should take the wings of a dove, and fly away and be at rest. This mood is common in Indian religion, which showed favour towards the opinion which is perhaps

[1] *Instinct in Man*, 'Classification of Instincts,' p. 169.

commoner than is supposed, that the best hours out of the twenty-four are those in which a man escapes from labour and sorrow into a dreamless sleep, and that nothing better could befall a man than that there should be no awakening on the morrow. In all types of New Testament doctrine the sovereign good can be spoken of on occasion as peace or rest—which is to be possessed amid the shocks of life and the tempests of time, and which will be consummated in the perfected bliss of a personal immortality.

(*b*) It has been said that the general tendency of self-affirmation also branches out into the specialised instinct of self-expansion, and religion has promised no less satisfaction to the positive than to the negative aspiration. Höffding was clearly wrong in supposing that the function of religion was merely an endeavour after 'the conservation of values.' Man is usually at least equally bent on the augmentation of his values, and he has been equally confident that in his religion he possessed a provision which ensured that his desire would be fulfilled. The savage relies on spirits or demons, not merely to ward off injury, but to help him to smite and to despoil his enemies; at the stage of national religion prayers are offered, not merely for immunity from calamity, but for the increase of the power, the prosperity, and the well-being of a people; and the preacher who proclaims the Christian gospel relies on it, not merely to save individual souls from forfeiting the spiritual values which they already possess—which values he may deem very inconsiderable—but to bring new and higher values into existence in their souls in the form of faith, repentance and new obedience. The truth is that religion has appealed with extraordinary force to the instinct of self-expansion, and has also fostered and

developed it by opening to it new worlds in which it could take a vastly wider sweep and also make the boldest demands on eternity. It has in fact seemed to man, as he has gazed upon the divine, that in union and alliance with God he might not merely procure certain improvements of his natural condition, but that he might attain to the possession and enjoyment of all that enters into the noblest conception of the chief end of his being and the perfection of his condition. It is true that at different periods and at different levels of culture, human opinion has varied widely as to the nature of the possessions that are supremely valuable and that make up a salvation; but it has at least been the common belief that by the help of a divine power he is destined to come into possession of the best that he is capable of possessing, and of becoming the best that he is capable of becoming; and it would be the deepest tragedy of history if it should turn out that this hope was shattered on the forces and the laws of a soulless universe, and discredited by the facts of a more prolonged racial experience. The instinct of self-expansion, when reacting to the stimuli of the every-day world, makes use of a variety of means adapted to secure its ends, and these means have religious counterparts in the provision that has been employed for cultivating the mystic intercourse with the divine. It has been a chief function of religion to make known the conditions under which the God-given salvation is bestowed, and along with this it has opened a way of access through worship to the divine presence, and has provided means of grace to create or cement the divine relationship that is the foundation of man's all-conquering desires and all-embracing hopes.

(*c*) The general instinct of self-affirmation has as one

of its special forms or modes of expression the tendency to self-elevation. This figures in M'Dougall's list as the instinct of self-assertion or self-display, with the accompanying emotion of positive self-feeling. It is a restless and avid instinct which has given infinite trouble to spiritual religion, though it has also received from it unexpected satisfactions. The instinct is that which has its physical symbols in the expanded chest, the erect form, and the firm and confident step. On the psychological side it takes the form of self-admiration, attended by a joyful emotion and also by a proneness to aggressiveness and choler. 'As derived or diverse aspects of this emotion,' says Ribot, 'we find pride, vanity, contempt, the love of glory, ambition, emulation, courage, audacity, boldness.'[1] The tendency to self-assertion is the root of many forms of anti-social and unethical conduct, and also of impiety towards God, while it is also a fruitful source of disappointments and mortifications in a world that is very far from being disposed to honour the individual in accordance with his own estimate; and it has therefore been an important part of the message of the ethical religions that the pride of the natural man is a deadly sin which has its appropriate penalty in humiliation, and that there is a self-abasement which is the condition of rising to true greatness and also of finding abiding rest of soul. On the other hand the higher religions have fostered self-elation in a spiritualised form—this being a natural consequence of the promises of a rich and enduring salvation. Since the religious man was made to feel that, in union with God, he became, in Luther's phrase, lord of all things, it was a psychological necessity that

[1] *La Psychologie des Sentiments*, 1922, p. 248.

this conviction should be accompanied by a self-consciousness that bore some resemblance to pride, and that had its own way of self-elation which St. Paul was not ashamed to speak of as glorying or boasting. Buddhism gave to the enlightened, Islam to the believer, a sense of immeasurable superiority to them that were without; their proud sense of being the chosen people enabled the children of Israel to endure, and to preserve their individuality, through the centuries when they were hammered on the anvil; Christians were described in apostolic times as 'an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession' (1 Peter ii. 9), and in the early centuries they were wont to speak of themselves as a people which had enriched the world of Jews, Greeks, and barbarians with an aristocracy of Heaven. Within the religious community the sentiment of positive self-feeling has legitimately asserted itself as the natural accompaniment of the possession of assured truth and the attainment of an authentic religious experience, while it has also contributed to the ill repute of religiosity by its tendency to develop into the Pharisaic forms of spiritual arrogance and sectarian exclusiveness.

2. It might be maintained that there is a general impulse to self-abnegation which is the counterpart of the general instinct of self-affirmation. Psychology has, however, contented itself with the recognition of the special form of self-abnegation which is the counterpart of the instinct of self-display. This is the instinct to which M'Dougall gives the name of self-abasement or self-subjection, with the accompanying emotion of negative self-feeling. It would be convenient as well as legitimate to appropriate to it the more familiar name of humility. 'The emotion of self-feeling in its nega-

tive form,' says Ribot, 'has as its base a feeling of feebleness or impotence. It betrays itself by a diminution or an arrest of movements, its mimicry is concentric, and it consists in diminishing instead of enlarging, in abasing instead of elevating. It is related on one side to sadness and on the other to fear.'[1] The specific emotion is aroused by the presence of an object of uncontested superiority, and the instinctive reaction consists in tendering expressions of homage and rendering some form of obedience. When the instinct is described in elementary terms, with illustrations drawn from the animal world, it may be thought that the only course consonant with human dignity is to endeavour to extirpate it. 'The impulse,' says M'Dougall, 'expresses itself in a slinking, crest-fallen behaviour, a general diminution of muscular tone, slow restricted movements, a hanging down of the head and sidelong glances. In the dog the picture is completed by the sinking of the tail between the legs.'[2] But this self-abasement was merely the forerunner of a spirit of humility which has found admission to every department of the higher life of mankind, and which has a justification in the circumstance that the human lot is crowded with experiences of utter subjection and dependence, and also with impressions of the overwhelming superiority of other beings. Humility is the spirit of the virtues on which Confucius set chief store, such as filial submission and obedience, and the reverent loyalty of the subject. The instinct is awakened in ordinary persons by contact with men of very exceptional force of ability and weight of character. It is a potent factor in the mental equipment of the crowd, and it is characteristic of the nation that, whatever may be its

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 248. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

political form of government, its cry is as in Israel of old, 'We will have a king over us.' A people is constitutionally in quest of the great man whom it may at least crown with a halo, and whom it can wholly trust and blindly follow. The moral life also is largely bound up with the awakening and quickening of the instinct of humility. It is stirred by the majesty of the moral law which creates a general disposition, apart from considerations of profit or credit, to honour it by an adequate obedience. To it also is due the remarkable influence which is possessed by those who are known, and by those who are believed, to be superlatively good. And the instinct of humility has been an important handmaid or coadjutor of religion. It has been readily stimulated by the great objects which were proposed to religious faith. In no religion have impressive objects been wholly lacking, and in the great faiths the Divinity has possessed a grandeur and an elevation, and has been invested with a commanding authority, that have evoked profound awe and reverence, and also engendered the penitential humility which makes the soul to bow under a sense of utter unworthiness before a holy God. The instinct as thus consecrated has found scope for its congenial reactions in the exercises and services of religious devotion. On the one hand the sense of the overwhelming greatness of the Divine Being has found its satisfaction in the offices of worship, in which through the reverent postures of prayer, the honorific sacrifice, and the utterances of adoration and self-dedication, man has tendered the homage felt to be the due of the Almighty. On the other hand his sense of the unspeakable greatness and majesty of God has disposed the worshipper to place himself entirely and unreservedly at the disposal of the divine will. On

the negative side this takes the form of resignation—of unrepining acquiescence in all events and circumstances, however untoward and seemingly cruel and meaningless, which it may seem good to the all-wise dispenser of events to permit or ordain. On the positive side this aspiration of the religious soul has been reinforced by the moral nature, and it has dutifully asked to be used as an instrument for the accomplishment of the divine purposes. Religion has in this case been construed as coinciding in great measure with moral obedience: the best to which a man can aspire, it is conceived, is to know the will of God, and knowing it to do it; and if aught be asked as a gift from God, it is that His will may be more fully known, and that power may be vouchsafed for a more perfect obedience as well as for a more willing and complete submission. When the instinct of humility has been thus intimately blended with man's moral, religious nature, it has given rise to the obligation-type of religion which is well entitled to rank as of fundamental importance.

3. Religion has also had close associations with, as it has had not a little advantage from, the instinct which it is now generally agreed to call tender emotion. It would be more natural, as is done in popular usage, to call this love, were it not that a term is required of the utmost latitude, and also that there is a natural feeling against the degradation of one of our greatest words by making it do duty in lowly biological relations. Moreover, the term love has recently been claimed for a 'sentiment' or complex of emotions which is built up by love as its organising principle.[1] Tender emotion is met with throughout the widest range of animal life and of human experience, and may

[1] Shand, *The Foundations of Character*, 1920, pp. 35 ff.

be thought to be the redeeming feature of a lower creation that is subject to the grim law of the war of all against all, and also of human societies that conduct their affairs on the competitive basis. Among the animals it is most strikingly manifested in a mother's love and care for her offspring, but the lower creatures can show affection and kindness to other members of their own species, while the dog seems to have for man a natural affection which can deepen into passionate devotion. In the human sphere it is the soul of the family, and the element of friendship ; as love of country it is a spring of the heroic and self-sacrificing virtues which have been some compensation for the destructions, the vices and the crimes of war ; and as love of our human kind it has brought into existence an ever-extending machinery of philanthropy which has laboured to assuage the woes of nations, and has been going on to take the whole earth for its province. As the chief altruistic member of the self-centred community of the instincts, tender emotion has seemed to be a somewhat bewildering anomaly, and there has been much controversy as to its origin and heredity. It may now be confidently said that the arguments for the selfish origin of the instinct have failed to carry conviction, and that it has established a claim to be regarded as primitive, or irreducible to any other elements of human nature. The emotion is hard to define, but happily also too familiar to require it. The conative reaction is somewhat complex. It prompts to seek or maintain contact with its object, and its most obvious and constant endeavour is to cherish the beloved object, to lavish on it marks of affection, and to render to it every kind of needed service that the benefactor is able to bestow. It has also an appropriating impulse, as

we shall see later, and the combination makes of love a striking paradox.

Religious thought, which has dared to face the facts of human nature, and to say the worst that could be said of man, has not been blind to the elements of nobility that are bound up with his capacity of loving. The ethical religions recognised in the natural emotion that which was akin to their own spirit, and an earnest of the revelations and the gifts which were announced from on high, and offered to the instinct new and worthier objects, at the same time that they pressed it into their service and thus invested the spiritual life with characters of greater warmth and intensity. At every religious level, indeed, there has been offered to faith some object which has captured the heart, and unsealed the springs of devotion. The animist has possessed that which he could love in the ghost of the departed chief that haunted the old scenes, or of the mother who revisited him in his dreams; the totemist could feel a genuine affection for the members of his sacred species of beasts or birds; and among the gods of the polytheist there have been those who, like Indra and Thor, were also popular heroes. It is a common note of the ethical religions that they introduced impressive figures which, while they compelled reverence by their greatness, at the same time evoked sympathy by their sufferings. The Buddhist gives his heart to the deliverer who out of love to man made the great renunciation; the Brahmanist can concentrate his devotion on Krishna or other incarnation of the Divine; and the Moslem, if he does not find what he can greatly love in the fierce and somewhat carnally-minded Mohammed, has love and tears for the martyred Hosain. The claim of Christianity to be the perfect and final

religion has been conceded by a large section of the human race, and one weighty reason was that it set forth as the objects of faith the adorable Being in whom all the might of infinite Godhead is united with all the tenderness and the loving care of which human fatherhood at its best is our least imperfect symbol, and Jesus Christ His Son, who, while in the form of God, took upon Him the form of a servant, and was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, and who stirred the human heart to its depths as the victim of the most unforgivable of human crimes. And while the objects of faith have been those to which the hearts of common folk could warm, the mystics have found in God, as transcendent or incarnate, a Being who could be laid hold on with a love which passed the love of bridegroom and bride, and which was accompanied by the mysterious tides of the soul in which the ineffable joys of love alternate with the pangs of estrangements and desertions. The most characteristic reaction of love, as has been said, is to cherish and to serve the object beloved. As the spring of active service love coincides to a large extent in its endeavours with the sense of obligation, but it is not content merely to do that which is its duty toward a master and lord, but is rather impelled to offer the self as its chiefest gift, and to add to this all other things as the inevitable corollary. In religion the impulse to service which is rooted in the tender emotion has in some degree been universally operative. On the lower levels, gifts were believed to be much needed and appreciated. In the higher faiths, the difficulty has been felt to be that the religious object was too great to need anything that the worshipper could render, and sometimes that it was too remote to be reached by any form of loving service. Religion

as love may be reckoncd the third fundamental type of religious expericnce.

4. Curiosity falls to be included as the fourth of the instincts which have been the chief associates and supports of religion. The elements of curiosity are the feeling of wonder, which is excited by the appearance of the unfamiliar or the extraordinary, and the conative impulse which prompts to investigate the strange fact, and to bring it within the range of the known by some form of identification or explanation. The instinct of curiosity primarily subserves practical interests of protection and well-being, but there is also in it an element of theoretical interest. Even the animal, which is compelled to investigate becausc knowledge means safety or food, can be actuated by a pure curiosity which may cost it its life. It is probablc that man, so long as he has been man, has felt pleasure in knowing for the sake of knowing. In his religious life man has chiefly desired to know for the sake of attaining and becoming, but the theorctical interest has been a concomitant, and in some periods an extrcmely influential factor. Man as man has always been interested in the explanation of the strange conditions and happenings of his lot ; and the great religious communities have produced and maintained a special class which has chicfly occupied itself with the knowledge of divine things, and which has bccn disposed to value the accompanying gift of a revelation as the most signal of the benefactions rendered by religion. Curiosity has been satisfied by religion in two ways. The conception of the Divinc Being and of divine power has been welcomed as a means of illuminating the darkncss which envelops the world, and solving the manifold riddles which are presented by the scheme of things, and especially by the

drama of human existence. But also the realm of the divine was itself a dimly discerned and mysterious region which as such made a strong appeal to the inquiring mind, and led to earnest efforts to penetrate the secrets of its nature and its operations. For the satisfaction of the natural human curiosity about God and divine things religion has favoured two methods—to seek knowledge at first hand, and to depend on those who have special means of knowing and who can speak with authority. The possession of first-hand knowledge of God and divine things has been claimed by two classes—the class of prophetic men who have had a sense of immediate contact with the divine, and the class of reasoning men who have investigated the evidence for a religious view of the world, and have given forth the results of their critical and speculative thinking. The way of the mass of mankind has been to look to the inspired men or the inspired institution for enlightenment about God and divine things ; and religions have responded to this need on the one hand by claiming to be the vehicles of a special or supernatural revelation, on the other by taking measures for the provision of instruction in connection with the offices of worship. The general sense of mankind supports the view that a religion which has no real light to throw on existence and destiny is worthless. We may therefore regard the experience for which religion is light as the fourth fundamental type.

In a complete study of the subject it would be desirable to take account of a number of other instincts which have played a considerable part at different stages of religious history. It may be sufficient now to refer briefly to two. The instinct of pugnacity, which is rebuked by the ethical religions, has been

somewhat conspicuously in evidence within their sphere of influence, and not least in the older Christendom. It has been plausibly said that the faith which put in the forefront the message of peace on earth has done more than any, with the exception of Islam, to make nation rise against nation, and that much more frequently than Islam it has disposed one part of a nation to rise against another in civil war, or to seek to crush it by persecution. So far as this is true the apology may be offered that human nature is so constituted that when a society or an individual intensely believes a creed, whether religious or political, and values it as a gospel, there has been an instinctive outbreak of wrath, reinforced by the instinct of repulsion and the emotion of disgust, against those who denied the creed and set at naught the gospel.

The gregarious instinct, which prompts human beings to collect in masses, and disposes the individual to join the herd and to take his guidance from its suggestions, has been a still more important factor in the religious history of the race. In savage and semi-savage life the individual follows the lead of the tribe as a matter of course. It was a maxim of Confucius that a man should conform to the customs of the society in which he lived, and walk in the ways that had been traversed by the innumerable company of his ancestors. In our civilised world, and even among peoples who pride themselves on their individualism, no argument carries more weight than that such and such is the opinion of an overwhelming majority, and in religious matters the argument from general consent has always been felt to be very materially strengthened when the bygone generations could be counted into the majority. The Roman Catholic

Church owes no small part of its credit to the notes which Bellarmine puts in the forefront—the name catholic, antiquity, permanence, and the vast multitude of its members representing all countries, nations and conditions.[1] The rejoinder made to this claim in the old *Scots' Confession* was that antiquity ought to be discounted as Cain was older than Abel or Seth, and that a multitude approving need carry no weight as a much greater multitude followed the Scribes, Pharisees and priests than approved of Jesus Christ and His doctrine. But a later Protestant generation found it necessary to supplement this reasoning by developing the argument—as happily it could do with a good conscience—that not only the authors of New Testament Scriptures but the most revered of the fathers, and with them a great multitude in all the Christian centuries, had professed and lived by the fundamental truths of the evangelical system, and that Rome had been the great innovator upon the faith and practice of antiquity.[2]

III

We have next to inquire whether religion, besides stimulating and controlling the ordinary instinctive tendencies, has been served by a special instinct impelling man towards God. In Theology it has been maintained that man has a specifically religious instinct, or at least that he has a disposition or *Anlage* which impels him to organise his experience from a religious point of view. Dr. M'Dougall declares that the theory of a religious instinct is untenable, 'and is not now seriously maintained by

[1] *Opera*, 1721, ii. 4, 'De notis Ecclesiae.'
[2] John Forbes, *Instructiones historico-theologicae*, 1645.

any psychologist.'[1] The chief reason which he gives for rejecting the view is that 'if we accept the doctrine of the evolution of man from animal forms we are compelled to seek the origin of religious emotions and impulses in instincts that are not specifically religious.'[2] And doubtless if nothing may be called an instinct which did not exist in our pre-human ancestors, the objection is fatal. But man as we now know him, and as he has been known for thousands of years, is much more than an animal; and the question of real moment is whether on the human plane he has shown congenital tendencies of a higher kind which are similar in structure to the instincts, and react in similar ways. It seems undeniable that man, whatever may have been the precise factors and stages of his development as a moral being, is now endowed with a moral instinct, in virtue of which he forms judgments and experiences emotions of a special kind, and is impelled to special lines of action. And man, however he may have acquired them, is certainly moved now by religious tendencies of the instinctive sort. It has been the testimony of the schools of the converts and the saints that they found the soul to be the seat of a divine restlessness and longing, and of a secret impulsion towards God. There is also good ground for saying that this tendency, though in a much weaker and more intermittent form, and operating in large measure below the threshold of consciousness, has been an important factor in the general human experience. The age-long duration and the world-wide prevalence of religion raise a presumption that it has had a root in human nature, and that man has felt an inward constraint to lift up his eyes to the hills, and to set

[1] *Op. cit.*, chap. xvi. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 302.

his feet in the way to some Jerusalem. Moreover, the religious preoccupations of mankind invite such obvious criticism from common sense, and the disappointments of the natural man with the results of his service of God have been so frequent and bitter, that it is highly improbable that religion would have maintained its hold as it has done upon the human race unless the voice of tradition and authority had been supported by a Godward attraction of the human spirit. The existence of the religious propensity in historical man has been as obvious to many psychologists as it has been to the theologian. 'The passion for God,' says Professor Alexander, 'is no less a real appetite of our nature than the passion for food.'[1] Dr. Lloyd Morgan, observing that new constitutive properties have emerged in the case of the moral and religious sentiments, declares them to be instinctive in the broader sense of the term. 'They appear,' he says, 'to be distinctive of man in virtue of his inherent constitution as human; they appear to be in large measure beyond volitional control; from the ethical point of view they appear to be the outcome of character; and on such grounds it can scarcely be denied that the moral and religious sentiments so widely prevalent in mankind, though they assume varied forms under varied conditions, have an instinctive basis in the human constitution.'[2]

The religious instinct has usually been described as a form of appetite, akin to hunger and thirst. The soul of the Psalmist thirsted for the living God in 'a dry and weary land, where no water is' (Ps. lxiii. 1). A want and craving of this appetitive kind is implied in some of the great promises of Jesus: 'He that

[1] *Op. cit.*, ii. p. 432.

[2] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. 'Instinct.'

cometh to Me shall not hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst' (John vi. 35). 'There is an eternal hunger for God,' says John of Ruysbroeck. 'And since the spirit longs for fruition, and is invited and urged thereto by God, it must always desire its fulfilment. The inward stirring and touching of God makes us hungry and yearning; for the Spirit of God haunts our spirit; and the more it touches it the greater our hunger and our craving.'[1] The affinity thus asserted of the bodily and the spiritual appetites extends to all the particulars of Dr. M'Dougall's analysis. In virtue of an innate disposition man has been determined to pay attention to a class of divine or sacred objects, he has experienced a peculiar emotional excitement, and he has been instigated to act in a characteristic way. On the cognitive side there is a close correspondence: bodily hunger is accompanied by a general reference to the world of foods, and can also be stimulated by the sight of a particular food; and similarly man has a general sense of the existence of a higher world which promises him satisfaction, while the spiritual appetite may also be quickened by the perception of objects possessed of what Otto has called numinous quality, in which he has recognised the presence or the manifestation of the Divine. That there is a religious feeling which contains something more than is found in fear, or awe or reverence, is a position which has already been maintained. The conative reaction characteristic of the religious instinct is the impulse to draw near to the divine object for the satisfaction of desire, but as in the case of hunger this primary impulse may be overborne by other influences and the result may be indifference or even repulsion.

[1] *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage* (Eng. tr.), 1919, p. 121.

The religious instinct has also an affinity with the tie which binds many creatures to the place of their nativity and with the influence which continues to haunt them amid other scenes and asserts the claims of home. It has been likened to the call of the upland stream that is heard by the salmon in the sea, and to the spell that has been laid on the homing pigeon ; and again to the homesickness of the child and of the exile. It also has its counterpart in the ethical life when a man who has fallen under the dominion of the world and the flesh realises the lost paradise of his early innocence, and feels that it would be better to return if only he could find the power. That the human soul has a similar homesickness whose object is God, was expressed in words that have gone through the ages, and gone round the world, because they have been felt to have revealed a secret of the universal heart—'Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it find rest in Thee.'[1] But perhaps the closest affinity is with the gregarious instinct. There is in fact the same evidence for holding that man has the one instinct that there is for crediting him with the other. The conative reaction is the same : in one instance he feels the attraction of the herd, and is disposed to follow its lead; in the other he feels the drawing of God, and is disposed to yield to the impulsion. In both instances, also, there is the accompaniment of a specific feeling, though the gregarious emotion has not attracted sufficient notice to receive a name. It is true, as was already observed, that the divine does not invariably attract and fascinate—but of the gregarious instinct also all that can be said is that it inclines a man to live and march with the

[1] Augustine's *Confessions*, chap. i.

crowd, while yet painful experiences in his earlier dealings with his kind, or a peculiarity of temperament, may lead him to turn his back upon society with indifference and contempt, and even to vent on it the hatred of the misanthrope. That the same interpretation is not put upon the two classes of similar facts—that a gregarious instinct is asserted in view of the observed gravitation of the individual to the herd, while a religious instinct is not asserted notwithstanding a similar gravitation towards God—is due to the fact that the human herd can be seen and heard and touched, while in the religious field nothing similarly palpable can be registered. And yet the fact that the object of the impulse is super-sensible is a bad reason for denying the existence of the impulse. It may be added that if there be a God, it was only to be expected that there would be a religious instinct in man. If a God exist, in whom we live and move and have our being, it is very unlikely that the unique intimacy of this relationship would not find expression in instinctive forms of premonition, feeling and conation. If there be a God who is the Father of our spirits, the divine heredity is doubtless as potent a factor in our constitution as the earthly heredity which links us in mystic union with generations of human and sub-human ancestors. Nay, the divine relationship might be expected to contribute influences which hold us even more firmly in their grip, and to carry a reminder of our relation to the source of our being. And further, if there be a God who is immanent in the world and in all finite creatures, it seems incredible that we human beings, who respond with such sensitiveness to the spirit of the communities of which we are constituent members, and to the spirit of our age, should

have no similar experience of the attraction and of the pervading influence of a Divine Spirit which is in some sense 'the soul of all souls.'

## IV

The discussion of the theological or metaphysical implications of instinct has formed a considerable chapter in the history of thought. In the older period the debate largely turned on the evidential value of the phenomenon as a manifestation of the power and wisdom of the Almighty. The common view was thus expressed by Addison: 'I look upon instinct as upon the principle of gravitation in bodies, which is not explained by any known qualities inherent in the bodies themselves, nor from any laws of mechanism, but is an immediate impression from the first mover and divine energy acting in the creatures.'[1] The argument was that the prodigies of instinctive behaviour must be due to intelligence, that they are not due to the intelligence of the humble creatures, and that they must therefore be referred to God, who endowed these with an extraordinary mechanical provision by a primeval miracle of creation. The conception of the creative miracle was thereafter rejected on two grounds —first that instinct has not the notes of unerring wisdom and efficiency which could be thought the hall-marks of a special creation, and especially that the evolutionary doctrine has made the resort to the miraculous explanation unnecessary. According to the Lamarckian theory, instinct is lapsed intelligence. 'It was originally a character consciously acquired and established as a habit, in successful adaptation to our environment, and then transmitted to descendants,

[1] *The Spectator*, No. 120.

the inherited character being subsequently modified by new successful adaptations which are in turn transmitted.' This theory presupposes the transmission of acquired characters, and has therefore been shaken by the doubts that have been cast on the doctrine with which it is vitally bound up. The Darwinian view is that 'the instincts were built up of accidental variations of a useful kind which were transmitted by inheritance.'[1] The difficulty in this case is to see how the fortuitous variations could be accumulated into a mechanism that would do the intricate and detailed things that are performed, say, by the paralysing wasp, which does work that seems as highly specialised as that of the surgeon operating for appendicitis. The attempt has therefore been made to combine the two theories in a doctrine of 'organic selection.' The one thing that is clear to an outsider is that a satisfactory explanation has not been formulated; and one may venture to think that were it not for the scientific aversion to all speculations of the kind, the theory would be favoured that each species possesses a collective intelligence which issues directions to the individual members out of its accumulated resources of knowledge and skill. It may be added that a naturalistic explanation, while it is an alternative to the notion that instinct was a miracle of creation, is quite compatible with the idea that it is a marvel of providence; and that as a providential wonder it can still contribute to support the faith that the universe is the habitation and the workshop of intelligence.

A new phase of the discussion was initiated by M. Bergson, who emphasised the contrast between instinct and intelligence, and ascribed to instinct a distinctive and effective method of grasping reality. 'If the con-

[1] Drever, *Instinct in Man*, p. 79.

sciousness which slumbers in instinct were to awake,' he observes, 'if it should realise itself inwardly in the form of knowledge instead of realising itself externally in action, if we knew how to interrogate it and it were able to reply, it would reveal to us the most intimate secrets of life.'[1] The theory has been expounded by Mr. Carr as follows:—

'The fundamental difference between intelligence and instinct,' he says, 'is one of kind, and lies in the mode of apprehension of reality, and the kind of knowledge that serves the activity of each. . . . Intelligence is the power of using categories, it is knowledge of the relations of things. Intelligence is an outward view of things, never reaching the actual reality it seeks to know. Instinct is the very opposite of intelligence, an inward looking, a knowledge of things seen from within. We too have a power of intuition, a direct vision that is not clothed with the categories of the understanding. The difficulty in describing instinctive knowledge lies in the fact that we can only communicate by using intellectual categories, and we have to describe that which, if it exists, is distinguished by the fact that it does not take the external form which the category imposes. Bergson has proposed the word "sympathy" in its original, or at least its technical, meaning to express the essentially internal nature of instinctive apprehension. It corresponds to the aesthetic faculty, the feeling-in of a state of one's own into an aesthetic object, that exists in us side by side with our faculty of normal perception.'[2]

The view thus expounded has been energetically controverted by Professor Stout, on the ground that

[1] *L'Évolution Créatrice*, [4], 1908, p. 179.
[2] *British Journal of Psychology*, vol. iii. pp. 232-4.

'there is nothing in the instinctive behaviour of animals which cannot be accounted for by the combination of certain purely biological adaptations with psychical processes marked by intelligence fundamentally akin in nature to all other intelligence.' [1]

When we consider the extraordinary efficiency of the tools which have been put at the disposal of the creatures as the result of the evolutionary process, it is not surprising if by the exercise even of a very low degree of intelligence of the ordinary kind they are able to achieve very remarkable results. Something similar is observed in a factory in which a workman who may be rather stupid, and may only be required to exercise a few simple movements, is nevertheless able, thanks to the wonders of modern machinery, to turn out highly finished products. At the same time there is a good deal of implicit or latent knowledge in the mind of the workman, including a knowledge of the end for which the factory exists, and the market which it supplies, and there is reason for thinking that a similar knowledge, which serves generally for stimulus and guidance, and becomes more and less explicit in different minds, pervades the realm of instinctive action. It is probable that there is a dim presentiment of the end to which the instinctive actions are directed in connection with many forms of instinctive behaviour—as in the preparations made by the mother for the appearance of her offspring; and there are some activities, notably those connected with the migratory and the homing instincts, which it is difficult to explain except on the assumption that some presentation is made to the bird-mind of an unseen land of promise, accompanied by some assurance that it would be

[1] *British Journal of Psychology*, vol. iii. p. 243.

good for it to be there, and also by some directions for guiding it on the journey. The mode of apprehension which Bergson calls intuition or sympathy was better described by Fries under the name of *Ahnung*—which might be rendered premonition or presentiment, were it not that the English terms are narrowed down to anticipations of the future. It is characteristic of this mode of apprehension that it is a combination of knowledge and ignorance. There is indubitable knowledge of the existence of a reality and of its promise and beckoning, but it might equally be called ignorance, because so little is known of the nature of the reality and of how it will fulfil expectations. It may seem an unsatisfactory species of knowledge, but at least it plays a very important part in human experience. It is the kind of apprehension that the youth has of the world on the threshold of his career—much is unknown and unknowable, but he at least knows that it will be good to go into it, to do the work of a man in it, and to deserve its prizes, and so he chooses his calling, and goes forward with good heart in his great enterprise. He also has the premonition that there is a bright realm to be found within this world, which has for its sun the love of man and woman, and with the same confidence he makes his second great adventure, trusting chiefly to the voice of hope and the guidance of his heart. And these things seem a parable of the way in which man has apprehended God. He has had the presentiment of the existence of the reality, though the divine was shrouded, even as our future is shrouded, in cloud and mist, and he had also the Godward impulse which would not suffer him to forget God, or to cease to hope in God.

If the religious instinct, as has been maintained,

be an elemental fact of the spiritual constitution of man, the fact has undeniable theoretical significance. For the existence of an instinct is naturally thought to be the indication and the pledge of the existence of an objective reality in which its craving will find satisfaction. It would in fact be a manifestation of a sardonic irony of which it would be unjust and ungrateful to suspect the world-order if it should prove to be the case that while hunger can depend on its sop, and thirst on its draught, there is nothing answering to the craving of the soul that has hungered and thirsted for the living God. The probable view is that man was endowed with a religious instinct to the end that he might enjoy a useful constraint and guidance in the times of his irrationality and ignorance, and that reason was given for use in manhood, not that it might destroy, but that it might fulfil and justify the monitions and the expectations of the period of childhood. And even if there were no special religious instinct, it would still be a fact of no little significance that the common instincts have responded to the call of religion even as, in the Greek legend, the beasts were subdued by the harping of Orpheus and followed him whithersoever he led. It cannot be without good cause that religion has evoked a general and sustained response from the instinctive forces that form so important a part of the mental constitution of man. For, unruly and contentious as the instincts are, and to this extent blind or purblind, that they make little account of any end save the business which specially concerns them, they have at least so much in common that they are in touch with the realities of the environment and attempt nothing in their ordinary exercise which does not work towards a very practical and palpable result.

And their spirit being thus essentially realistic and practical, it must seem improbable that they would have reacted with the unanimity and energy with which they have responded to the appeal of religion, had it been the case that what was presented to them in religion was a body of unsubstantial figments and precarious guesses which had no better claim to belong to the world of reality than that they had achieved a certain ghostly and fleeting existence as phantasms of the human mind. Rather is the presumption that their extraordinary response has been due to the circumstance that the ideas touching God and divine things which called them into play have been apprehensions, dim and chaotic oftentimes, but still apprehensions of a realm of spiritual realities which overarches and interpenetrates the world of terrestrial experience, and that they were given a commission to make some contribution towards keeping man in relations with God, and making him to strive, however dimly he might discern the goal, towards the chief end of his existence.

# CHAPTER IV

## RELIGION AND THE SUBCONSCIOUS

The development of modern Psychology which has excited most general interest is the investigation of the subconscious levels of the mind. Writing over twenty years ago, James pronounced this to be the most important step forward that had occurred in Psychology in his time, and spoke of 'a discovery which had revealed an entirely unsuspected peculiarity in the constitution of human nature.' His description of the phenomena was that 'there exists beyond the field, or subliminally, a set of memories, thoughts or feelings which are outside of the primary consciousness altogether, but must yet be classed as conscious facts of some sort, able to reveal their presence by unmistakable signs.'[1] The mysterious territory was actually discovered by religious explorers who may be said to have constructed rough charts, and given names to mountains and rivers; expeditions were made by Leibniz and Sir William Hamilton;[2] and modern Psychology has undertaken a scientific survey that has improved the maps, changed place-names, brought to light many new facts, and also provoked much controversy as to the nature of the territory, the character of the inhabitants, and the form of their government. Religion has

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*,[7], 1903, p. 233.

[2] J. L. M'Intyre, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. 'Subconsciousness.'

had a twofold connection with the subconscious. The typical facts and occurrences are largely supplied by religious experience. Theology, moreover, has generally been identified with an interpretation of the facts in which the limitations imposed upon scientific inquiry have been unknown or have been disregarded, and a metaphysical explanation has been offered of the more impressive phenomena. It is desirable to begin with a general view of the subconscious, in which we distinguish its divisions with their characteristic data, and thereafter to discuss the principal interpretations with special reference to the theological explanation.

## I

The term subconscious has been used with a wider and a narrower range of meaning. In the wider sense, which is here adopted, it embraces all that lies outside and below the field of consciousness. In the centre lies the division which may be called the land of light—that which at any given moment is illuminated by the operations of conscious intelligence. The subconscious which lies beyond this sunlit space consists of two realms—the subconscious in the narrower sense of the word, which is a land of twilight, and the unconscious, of which it may be said, as of primeval chaos, that darkness is upon the face of the deep. The subconscious in the narrow sense is the borderland between the region of light and the region of darkness. It rounds off and frames the field of consciousness, and it shades off into the realm of the unconscious. The unconscious also has been defined more widely and more narrowly—sometimes as including all the contents of the mind which at a

particular time are unrealised and lie beyond our ken, sometimes as restricted to a section from which the intelligence is entirely excluded, and which only makes known its existence and its contents in indirect ways. Within the territory of the subconscious, a number of departments have been distinguished. Those commonly recognised are the storehouses which serve as repositories of psychical materials, and the workshops in which mental processes are carried out. The processes imply workers of some sort, and workers may be held to imply the existence, as a third department, of dwellings or retreats.

The subconscious in the narrower sense, as has been indicated, is the field containing those objects of which we are dimly and partially aware when the mind is giving its attention to matters within the range of its conscious interests. The stock illustrations are the student who, while engrossed in his book, is also aware of the ticking of the clock, or the miller who, while intent on grinding his corn, is also alive to the noise made by his machinery and his water-wheel. This mode of consciousness has been utilised in religion to reconcile the claims of God upon the soul with the natural and necessary preoccupations of an earth-bound creature. For it makes it possible for a man to be involved in worldly employments and recreations, and at the same time to preserve a habitual sense of the presence of God, and to give to the things which are seen and temporal a constant reference to the things that are unseen and eternal.

1. Beyond or below the borderland the realm of the subconscious has its equipment of storehouses. It is obvious that there exist in the mind, somehow or somewhere, at least two repositories upon which

we are continually drawing for information and directions. One is the storehouse of the memory. In addition to the things which we may be recalling at any moment by conscious effort, or which present themselves before us of their own accord, there are innumerable things which we could recollect if we desired, or which would start up out of the depths of oblivion if they were likely to be relevant to a conversation or useful for the business in hand. The dormant state of the contents of memory was defined by Hamilton as the first degree of mental latency. 'I know a science, or language, not merely while I make a temporary use of it, but inasmuch as I can apply it when and how I will. The infinitely greater part of our spiritual treasures lies always beyond the sphere of consciousness, hid in the obscure recesses of the mind.'[1] A second repository which is recognised in popular as well as in philosophical thinking is the individual character. Our thoughts, words and actions have their source in a system of tendencies and dispositions which have acquired a certain fixity and permanence. Every individual may be said to possess a character of a sort in respect that he is a bundle of habitudes, and when the habitudes are such that he is normally governed by good maxims he possesses a character in the higher meaning of the word. Religion, occupied as it has been with central concerns of the soul, has naturally had much to do with these repositories, and much to say about their contents. The call to repentance has been enforced by the admonition to remember past sins. The storehouse of character was recognised by Jesus when He said that 'the good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is

[1] *Lectures on Metaphysics*, 1870, i. p. 339.

good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil' (Luke vi. 45). In Christian Theology it is taught that spiritual well-being consists in the possession of a sanctified character which spontaneously utters itself in pious thoughts and feelings, and in virtuous actions. Theology has also affirmed the existence of a special repository to which it has given the name of original sin. In opposition to the view that actual sins are due to the efficiency of a will acting with the liberty of indifference, it has been maintained that they have a secret source in a body of selfish and sensuous propensities which are part of the inherited outfit of human nature, and which exercise upon the will so strong and constant a pressure that a fall has been a foregone conclusion for every child of Adam.

The storehouse of memory contains a special chamber which is inaccessible, either because nature has locked the door, or because one has mislaid the key. This was referred to by Hamilton as the second degree of latency. He illustrates it by a number of cases of persons who displayed unsuspected accomplishments under abnormal conditions—the most memorable being that of an illiterate servant-girl who, when in a fever, recited passages in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, which she had overheard years before from the intellectual exercises that went on in a minister's study.[1] This barred chamber has been recognised in religion in various forms, and it was rediscovered by the Freudian school. Its contents are described by Rivers as 'the experience which is not capable of being brought into the field of consciousness by any of the ordinary processes of memory or association, but can only be recalled under certain special conditions, such as

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 340.

sleep, hypnotism, the method of free association, and certain pathological states.' [1]

2. The subconscious realm is, next, the seat of workshops in which things are done which bear the impress of mental activity. This is the department to which the name of the subconscious is often specially attached. 'A subconscious process,' says Dr. Morton Prince, 'may be provisionally defined as one of which the personality is unaware, which, therefore, is outside the personal consciousness, and which is a factor in the determination of conscious and bodily phenomena, or produces effects analogous to those which might be directly or indirectly induced by consciousness.' [2] The reason for postulating the invisible workshops is that results emerge in our conscious field which we do not own as our handiwork, while yet they have the marks of being the products of a train of thought or of a sustained effort of will. These results were ascribed by Hamilton to 'unconscious modifications of mind,' or 'latent activities below the surface of consciousness.' Examples are given from the experiences of the intellectual life. 'An author, wrestling with the intricacies of his plot, finds his mind flagging. He lights his pipe, paces his room, glances at a picture or the newspaper, giving his mind a holiday. When he returns to his task the argument has advanced, difficulties have vanished and he proceeds to write. Or he sleeps over it and all is cleared up.' In hypnotic states there is a much more complete detachment from conscious activity. 'You suggest in hypnosis to a suitable subject that he shall multiply certain numbers, or calculate the number of seconds intervening between certain hours—let us say between

[1] *Instinct and the Unconscious*, [2], 1922, p. 9.
[2] *The Unconscious*, [2], 1921, p. 156.

10.43 and 1.13 o'clock, the answer to be given in writing on a certain day. The subject is then awakened immediately, before he has time to do the calculation while in hypnosis. Later, if the experiment be successful, at the time designated the subject will absent-mindedly or automatically write the figures giving the answers.'[1] The decision, in the often-quoted words of Wendell Holmes, 'is delivered like a prepaid parcel, laid at the door of consciousness like a foundling in a basket.'

This form of experience has been familiar in the religious life. It was known to the Psalmist who said that 'God giveth unto His beloved in sleep' (cxxvii. 2). The process is exemplified in the type of conversion that has been distinguished as spontaneous awakening, in which the mind suddenly realises that it has come into possession of a new apprehension of God or of the terms of salvation. Illumination was regarded by the Lutheran divines as one of the well-marked stages of conversion, and it was taught that the experience could occur as the result of a process in which the Word of God had secretly germinated in the mind. 'The power of illumination, wherewith the divine word is endowed, is not strictly tied to the acts of hearing, reading or meditation, but the word which has been heard, read, transmitted to and retained by the mind ever works efficaciously, in virtue of its illuminating powers.'[2] Under the same law a person may awake to the fact that his faith has secretly withered and died. And similarly with the religious feelings—it may be found that during a season of waiting they have been quickened to new warmth and intensity, or, more commonly, they are found to have run a course issuing in

[1] Laird, *Problems of the Self*, 1917, p. 96.
[2] Luthardt, *Dogmatik*, [6], 1882, p. 260.

lukewarmness or indifference. The will also seems to do important work connected with the religious standing below the level of consciousness. Resolutions of the kind that are fundamental in conversion are declared to have been decisively though unconsciously taken, while it is a common experience that important particular problems such as the choice of a spiritual vocation may settle themselves overnight in the same spontaneous fashion. And these also have their negative counterparts in apostasies, betrayals and perversions, which may issue in a sudden discovery that, though a man knew it not, the foundations of his character had been broken up in the dark.

3. The activities of the storehouses and the workshops, as has been said, require us to think of a working population of some kind. Experience makes us acquainted with systems of tendencies which give the impression of being more than impersonal forces working blindly and mechanically, and which have therefore been readily personified in popular thinking. These fall into two classes, according as they are associated with our normal life or emerge in connection with pathological states.

Normal experience has so much of variety and incoherence that even the ordinary man feels there is something to be said for the idea that he is two persons and perhaps more. It is an old and widespread conception that there are two selves—a lower and a higher, which behave as if they were unsympathetic and hostile individuals. This idea was favoured by Plato; and it was given a prominent place in Christian thinking by St. Paul, who pictured the soul as torn by a perennial conflict between the mind, also called the inward man, and the flesh or the outward man, in which the flesh has the upper hand until the mind

is renewed and reinforced by the Spirit of God (Rom. vii. 14 ff.). Modern Psychology has taken over the distinction and has carried the analysis further. James contrasted the self as knower, the I, with the self as known, the me, and in the known or empirical self he distinguished the material me, the social me, and the spiritual me.[1] The constitutional situation might be more fully described by saying that there are three secondary selves which may be assigned to a lower nature, and four which may be assigned to a higher nature. The three which live and move on the lower plane are the bodily self, chiefly urged by appetites and the desire of repose, which values sensuous pleasure and ease as the highest good; the possessive self, inspired by the acquisitive instinct, which delights in accumulating and handling the goods of which money is the symbol; and the social self, prone to self-display, and also touched with tender emotions, which sets high store on honour and affection. Each of these quasi-individuals has its manifest utility in the economy of the human constitution, but when any one exaggerates its importance and seeks to determine the policy of the whole it notoriously produces disorder and mischief, and may reduce the whole community to ruin and disgrace. They also exercise a salutary check upon one another. The possessive self may call on the bodily self to curb its indulgences, and rouse itself out of sloth to profitable activities, while the social self can insist on the possessive self doing generous things that will win the respect and the goodwill of the society in which one's lines have fallen. The secondary selves associated with the higher nature are the intellectual self which gives its

[1] *Textbook of Psychology*, 1904, chap. xii.

heart to know, the aesthetic which delights in the world of beauties and sublimities, the ethical which disposes us to think and act in terms of duty, and the religious which impels us to communion with God. It is symptomatic of the difference in dignity of the two groups that for members of the lower group symbols have been found among the animals—as the hog, the fox, and the peacock, while the members of the higher group may be cited as the student, the artist, the schoolmaster, and the priest of the soul. In the hour of temptation it is found useful to identify the quarter from which a dubious suggestion emanates, and to refer the proposal to the arbitrament of a council comprising the other members of the community.

In addition to these secondary selves, which are more or less familiar acquaintances in ordinary experience, there are others with more striking features which make their appearance under exceptional conditions. In the hypnotic state there comes upon the scene a quasi-individual of a more mysterious kind, which stands in close relation with the normal self, and shares in its equipment and resources, but which also has distinctive traits, and seems to have at its command special intellectual resources of its own. The subconscious personality is defined as a condition where 'complexes of subconscious processes are constellated into a personal system, manifesting a secondary system of self-consciousness endowed with volition and intelligence.'[1] In pathological cases the personality seems to be shattered, and several quasi-individuals, distinguished by intellectual and moral differences, can appear in succession and assume the direction of the affairs of the household. An often-quoted case is that of a Frenchwoman, Felida,

[1] Morton Prince, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

who oscillated between two modes of existence—in which she appeared to be two totally different persons, one of whom knew everything, and the other knew nothing, about her occult associate.[1] The story of Miss Beauchamp, as told by Dr. Morton Prince, is stranger than fiction. The personality of a cultured and high-minded young lady, as the result of a shock, split up into three, which gradually revealed themselves in the diverse characters of a serious but somewhat eccentric student, an irresponsible madcap, and a well-principled and sensible woman of the world. The first two developed very strained relations, plotted and counter-plotted, and in a prolonged duel fought not merely for the mastery, but as if for their very lives. The result of the therapeutic treatment was that the audacious and mischievous member was thrown into chains in some asylum of the unconscious, and that the other two were consolidated in a satisfactory synthesis which substantially reproduced the character that had existed before the disruptive shock.

The phenomena of the hypnotised subject and of the dissociated personality have bulked largely in religious history and literature. Magic seized upon them, and they brought much gain to the soothsayers. They supplied material to the Greek oracles, which, however, was edited with the help of general knowledge and of common sense. The great religions viewed them askance as belonging to a domain with which it was unlawful and dangerous to intermeddle. The Old Testament gives a tragic example of the shattered personality in the story of Saul, and the writer of the Fourth Gospel suggests that there was a Judas who was other and better than the traitor (John xiii. 27). In the ministry of Jesus, the natural

[1] Binet, *Alterations of Personality* (Eng. tr.), 1896, pp. 7 ff.

horror excited by sufferers was replaced by the spirit of the good Samaritan, and abundant powers for the work of healing were promised to the children of the Kingdom (Matt. x. 8 ; Mark xvi. 17). The Church of the patristic age regarded exorcism as an important branch of Christian service. The Protestant Church has doubted the old diagnosis, and in modern times it has on the whole left the possessed to the physician.

II

Is it possible to assign to the subconscious a definite rôle? It may be taken for granted that its existence as part of our constitution is of itself conclusive evidence of its utility to the species. And obviously at the least it is a labour-saving and a time-saving mechanism. It makes it possible for us to devote ourselves to new objects and fresh tasks while retaining a real hold upon other things with which we had previously dealt. With its repositories of memory and character it serves in the intellectual and in the moral life much the same uses which are served in the economic life by the bank in which we deposit our gains, and on which we can draw when we require money. It seems indeed to be a very grave disservice that it makes the hand of the past to lie so heavily upon us, and indeed the dead hand not only of a human but of a subhuman past, but this has to be accepted as the way in which it makes effective the principle of human solidarity, to which we owe the best as well as the worst of what we have ; and if it makes sin to abound, it makes amends by reproducing from generation to generation many high qualities which make man to differ from the brutes. Opinion is seriously divided as to the general character of the subconscious,

and as to its distinctive function. According to one view it is an amorphous or protean entity, which staggers to and fro like a drunken man, behaving without any leading idea or coherent purpose. When a definite rôle is assigned to it, it has been conceived to be characteristically sinister and dangerous, and also to be preponderantly friendly and beneficent.

1. The subconscious, as commonly depicted, is a mass of inconsistencies. The things which have been said of it might be put together somewhat as follows in a character-sketch.

'The intellectual powers of the subconscious are of a low order. It is incapable of rational thinking, and it is responsible for our unconsidered utterances and our stupid blunders. On the other hand, it has intellectual gifts which are remarkable and in some respects prodigious. It has an extraordinary memory in which are preserved every incident of our past lives, every other item of knowledge that we ever possessed, and also manifold pieces of information which we picked up casually and did not know that we had acquired. It has command of much information which is outside the ken of our normal self, especially in regard to the state of our health, so that it is able to perceive the necessity of a grave operation, and perhaps to make it known in a dream. It is good at figures and can solve difficult mathematical problems. It cultivates poetry, in which it sometimes rises to the heights of genius. It has much cleverness of the sort which is directed to the art of persuasion, and provides plausible arguments in support of any course which it knows that we desire in our hearts. It has striking telepathic powers, and conveys its discoveries through automatic writing. On the ethical plane it is weaker. It lacks self-control, is childish in disposition, and has

passionate outbursts of anger. It is the receptacle of, and panders to, the animal propensities. But it has one quality which goes some way to atone for its ethical deficiencies, for it is extremely impressionable—responding readily to good influences as well as bad, and so long as a good impression lasts it casts its influence strongly on the virtuous side. And on occasion also it supplies the inspiration to acts of moral heroism. On the religious side it is an indifferentist, with a tendency to profanity. On the other hand, it is a channel if not a source of saintly aspirations, and of the intuitions of religious genius. In short, as man has been said to be the enigma of the universe, so the unconscious may be said to be the enigma of man.'

2. The sinister aspect of the subconscious conceived as the unconscious has been brought into strong relief by Freud. The impulses which come from the unconscious, we are told, 'seem to rise up from a veritable Hell.' 'You refuse,' he says, 'to concede so large a part in the human constitution to what is evil, but do your own experiences justify you? Have you met with so much goodwill in your superiors and rivals, so much chivalry in your enemies, and so little envy amongst your acquaintances, that you feel it incumbent on you to protest against the idea of the part played by egoistic baseness in human nature? Do you not know how uncontrolled and unreliable the average human being is in all that concerns sexual life? Or are you ignorant of the fact that all the excesses and aberrations of which we dream at night are crimes actually committed every day by men who are wide awake? Psychology but confirms the old saying of Plato that the good are those who content themselves with dreaming of what others, the wicked, actually do. Human experience is the seat of a sustained

conflict in which the protagonists are, not a higher and a lower nature as is commonly supposed, but self-interest and sexual lust.'[1] The sexual instinct permeates experience in all directions, and appears in many forms more or less thinly disguised, and these libidinous longings come into frequent collision with the self-regarding instincts. 'The pathogenic conflict is one between the ego-instincts and the sexual instincts.'[2] The propensities cannot all get their way—especially must the libidinous longings submit to restraint and repression, and in their prison-house the turbulent company fret and fume and meditate violent irruptions. The unconscious is, in short, in the language of Mr. Bertrand Russell, 'a sort of underground prisoner, breaking upon our daylight respectability with dark groans and maledictions and strange atavistic lusts.'[3] The scandal which is thus threatened, especially by the carnally-minded company, is, however, so far averted by a special provision of our constitution to which Freud gives the name of the censor. 'They are guarded,' as Rivers explains, 'by an authority working within the region of the unconscious, upon which it exerts a controlling action. It checks those elements of unconscious experience which by their unpleasant nature would disturb their possessor if they were allowed to reach his consciousness, and if it permits these to pass, sees that they appear in such a guise that their nature will not be recognised.' 'In sleep, this censorship allows much to reach the sleeping consciousness, but as a rule distorts it so that it appears only in a symbolic form, and with so apparently meaningless a character that the comfort of the sleeper is not affected. In the

[1] *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (Eng. tr.), 1921, p. 122.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 294.
[3] *The Analysis of Mind*, 1921, p. 28.

waking state the censorship is held to be active and efficient. It only allows unconscious experience to escape in the form of slips of the pen or to show its influence in apparently motiveless acts which, owing to the complete failure of the agent to recognise their nature, in no way interfere with the efficiency of the censorship.'[1] 'The unconscious system,' says Freud, 'may be compared to a large ante-room, in which the various mental excitations are crowding upon one another, like individual beings. Adjoining this is a second, smaller apartment, a sort of reception-room, in which, too, consciousness resides. But on the threshold between the two there stands a personage with the office of door-keeper, who examines the various mental excitations, censors them, and denies them admittance to the reception-room when he disapproves of them.'[2] It has to be added that the censor, while labouring to avert scandalous outbreaks in thought and speech, is made to appear responsible for much damage and disorder of the soul through his measures of repression. For the gloom and the terrors of the unhinged mind may be due to the fact that painful experiences, though they had been thrust out of sight and forgotten, for that very reason worked on as a poisoning and disrupting influence. Rivers gives as a typical case that of a man who was obsessed by claustrophobia, or the horror of confined spaces, which was discovered to have had its origin in a long-forgotten episode of his boyhood, when he was attacked in a narrow passage by a savage dog. In the psycho-analytic treatment an important part of the procedure consists in dragging the hidden things to light by divining the meaning of dreams and of casual talk, and it is reported as a common experience that, with the

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 228. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 249.

discovery of the cause of the obsession, a man has been delivered from the plague of his unrest and his fears.

The Freudian system contains a number of elements which Theology had recognised, expressed in other ways, and utilised in a widely different context. The same class of facts were recognised in the doctrine of total depravity, but with the difference that Theology, remembering that man still bears the image of God, has seldom painted the picture in quite so dark colours. There have also been religious thinkers who, impressed like Freud with the strength of the sexual instinct, have declared sensuousness, which has its chief example in carnal concupiscence, to be the essence and the root of sin; but the general verdict has been given against this view, on the ground that there are sins of selfishness which have an independent root, and also sins of a diabolic kind which cannot be explained either by pure selfishness or by animal lust. The work of the censor in veiling things and keeping the door of consciousness, if it have anything like the importance which Freud ascribes to it, is unlikely to have been overlooked until our time. According to the Greek sages, nothing is more difficult, though nothing is more important, than self-knowledge, and this implied that there is a veil on the face of the self. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of deceitfulness as being the genius of sin (iii. 13)—an observation which is illustrated by the fact that nothing is so common as for us to misunderstand our own motives, and to be mistaken as to the essential spirit and the fundamental aim of our lives. The theory of the censor that controls the malign forces of the subconscious was anticipated in another way by the Roman Catholic doctrine of the guardian angel who is appointed to supervise each individual from his nativity onward,

and who, in addition to providential offices, ministers to the soul by 'suggesting good and salutary thoughts, and guarding against assaults of evil spirits.'[1] The practical side of Psycho-analysis has also had parallels in Christian teaching. Theology has given a description of man's sinful condition which bears a general resemblance to the account of the unconscious as a storehouse of suppressed memories which are at the same time the unsuspected source of afflicting and desolating influences. For it has taught that the misery of man is due in the last resort to his sins, at the same time that he is commonly unaware of the fact; and also that the beginning and the condition of the new life which has the promise of repose of soul is that a man shall remember his transgressions, recognise them in their character of sins against God, and make confession of them to God—and on fit occasion also, as St. James counselled, confess them to others (v. 16).

3. In the system of M. Coué an essentially beneficent rôle is ascribed to the subconscious, which figures as a useful coadjutor in the business of self-amelioration. The wrong way of trying to become better, we are told, is to rely on voluntary exertion. This is expressed in the law of reversed effort, which, according to the authoritative exponent of the doctrine, was Coué's most original contribution, and indeed a stroke of genius. The law of reversed effort is that 'when an idea imposes itself on the mind to such an extent as to give rise to a suggestion, all the conscious efforts which the subject makes in order to counteract this suggestion are not merely without the desired effect, but they actually run counter to

[1] Hunter, *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*, 1895, ii. p. 302. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I. i. 113.

the subject's conscious wishes and tend to intensify the suggestion.' 'The harder we try to think the good idea, the more violent will be the assaults of the bad idea—as with the drunkard whose best efforts to give up drinking serve merely to lead him to the nearest taproom.'[1] The right way is to use the imagination to picture the desired state of improvement, and to believe that it is well, or that it is becoming well with us. The prescription is every morning and every evening, betwixt sleep and waking, to practise concentration upon the formula of general suggestion—'day by day, in all respects, I get better and better,' and to supplement this when assailed by some mental or physical trouble by the particular suggestion—'this is passing off.' By these practices the suggestions are passed on under favourable conditions to the subconscious, which accordingly gives them a friendly reception, and makes it its duty to see that as far as possible they will be carried into effect. It may be added that the rules, while primarily bearing upon the welfare of the body, have also an application to moral conditions.[2]

The maxims thus enunciated have at least a kinship with principles with which the Christian has been familiar in a grander context. The law of reversed effort has some affinity with the teaching of St. Paul, that the Law is weak through the flesh—that so far from making alive, the precept rather stimulates to opposition, and that the struggle after perfection is likely to issue in the despairing cry, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?' The central feature of the system is the reassertion of the efficacy of faith—which in Theology

[1] Baudouin, *Suggestion and Auto-suggestion* (Eng. tr.), 1920, pp. 121 ff.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

has been magnified as the act by which man lays hold upon God and appropriates the highest spiritual blessings. But when the psychological doctrine is hailed as a gospel, it may well be asked if those who put this value on it are aware how much more has been offered them in the Christian religion which they probably profess. If a person every night and every morning offers up prayer in which mention is made with thankfulness of the goodness and mercy that have followed him all the days of his life, and in which further blessings of time and eternity are claimed by faith and hope, he may be assured of having the full benefit of the newer psychological wisdom along with such addition of blessings, spiritual and temporal, as the Father in Heaven is able and willing to bestow. Regarded as a substitute for a religion—and it is right to say that Coué himself does not make this claim for it—the scheme has nothing of the dignity of a great faith, but in its counsels concerning the management of the subconscious may rather remind us of the traffic of the savage with the ghosts and demons which he lays himself out to outwit or to cajole.

## III

It remains to consider the explanations that have been offered of the phenomena of the subconscious realm of experience. The chief question concerns the ultimate nature of the power or agent to which the strange mental occurrences are to be referred. The explanations are of two main types which may be distinguished as immanent and transcendent. The immanent doctrine, which is the common basis of a group of scientific and philosophical theories, presupposes that the human individual is a self-contained and

autonomous being, and it takes cognisance only of powers and capacities that can be reckoned as items of the constitutional equipment of man. The transcendent doctrine is to the effect that the extraordinary phenomena are attributable, at least in part, to some other spiritual being or beings that enter into communion with the human spirit, and to the transmission into human experience of thoughts and volitions that originated in some outside centres of conscious activity. The latter doctrine, while it has usually been combined with a large recognition of natural forces, has been supported in principle by a general consensus of religious thinking.

1. The immanent theories fall into two classes according as they deny or affirm that conscious mind is the chief factor in the production of the enigmatic experiences and activities. The negative attitude is taken in two theories—the materialistic, according to which the work is done by the body, and the agnostic, which has nothing to say, and makes it appear that nothing can be known, about the essential nature of the power which energises in the subconscious field. The positive pair of theories may be distinguished as the psychical and the intellectualist.

(*a*) The materialistic theory is to the effect that the phenomena of subconsciousness, and in particular the products of the so-called workshops, are fully explained by changes in the bodily organism. Ideas or resolutions which leap into consciousness without known antecedents of reflection and deliberation are construed as the ways in which the mind mirrors, and adopts the results of, a physical process which had previously run its course in the brain and the nervous system. This is the process to which Carpenter gave the name of unconscious cerebration: 'The cerebrum,' so he

summarily states the thesis, 'may act upon impressions transmitted to it, and may elaborate intellectual results, such as we might have attained by the intentional direction of our minds to the subject, without any consciousness on our part.' [1] The theory is often associated with, but does not entirely depend on, the general doctrine of Materialism, according to which thought is merely a secretion of the brain, and our ideas and purposes are unimportant concomitants or by-products of the physical occurrences in the body. It is, now, undeniable that bodily conditions are reflected in the mental life, and that they contribute to and colour the contents of the mind. It is a familiar observation that the state of our health, which is governed by physical laws, may profoundly affect our intellectual activities, our general outlook on life, and even our moral and religious attitude. But while the body supplies materials for thinking, and also influences thinking, it seems axiomatic that a material organisation as such has not itself the power of thinking—any more than it is possible for the mind to occupy a measured portion of space, to be weighed in the balances, and to tend to fall to the centre of the earth. It is true that there are cases in which results emerge as the result of physical processes on which a high value can be placed by intelligence—generation, as Hume observed, produces very remarkable results which, as in man, may embody the highest values, while the calculating machine throws off products which the rational mind acknowledges and welcomes. In the latter case, however, it is certain, and in the former there is good ground for holding, that the reason why the results are such as intelligence can appreciate is simply that intelligence had previously had a hand in the

[1] *Principles of Mental Physiology*, [7], 1896, chap. xii.

mechanism which threw them off. The most that can be said of unconscious cerebration is that it supplies the mind with physical data and stimulates it to get to work in its own way, when it proceeds to translate them into its own characteristic products.

(*b*) The agnostic theory is represented by the doctrine of the unconscious which is current in the school of Psycho-analysis. When the unconscious is referred to in the sense of the productive principle, as distinguished from the phenomena, the impression is sometimes conveyed that the entity belongs to the genus of intelligent spirit—as notably in the case of the Freudian censor. But it appears that this is only a manner of speech, and that the operative factor cannot be identified with mind. 'The unconscious mental processes,' it is said, 'present all the attributes of mental ones, except that the object is unaware of them,' and since awareness is an essential note of mind, this is tantamount to saying that its place is in a different order of existence. As Professor Laird observes, 'it is just like Mr. Churchhill's "cannibals in all respects except the act of devouring the flesh of the victims."' 'The only evidence we have of anything in ourselves beyond bodily processes,' says Mr. Field, 'is our experience of our own conscious processes. And the only things which we can call "mind" or "mental" with any intelligible meaning are those conscious processes. Anything in us which is neither conscious nor physical is therefore something unknowable or indescribable, or indescribable except in purely negative terms. But if the unconscious is thus merely a negative idea, something of which all that we can say is that it is not physical and not conscious, then it ceases to be anything which could be given as a real explanation. It is simply an

*x*, an unknown cause, and to ascribe anything to it is simply a confession of ignorance.'[1] And if it is inconceivable that matter should do the work of mind, it is equally inconceivable that the work should be done by an entity which, whatever else it may be, is something else and other than mind. It cannot even be pleaded for it, as it may for matter, that it has given evidence in other ways of very remarkable powers which bespeak for it respectful consideration when higher claims are made for it.

(*c*) Under the name of the psychical theory we may group a set of views, according to which mental occurrences are conscious processes of a human self, but not of a single or unitary self. The human being, who naturally thinks of himself as an individual, is conceived of rather as a society of individuals, possessing the personal notes of consciousness and purposiveness. Myers has given countenance to the idea of the self as a combination which may be described as a colony of selves, but he was more concerned to maintain a form of the transcendent theory according to which 'no self of which we can have cognisance is more than a fragment of a larger self—revealed in a fashion at once shifting and limited through an organism not so framed as to afford it full manifestation.'[2] The pathological cases have been adduced as indubitable examples of multiple personality, and a separate personality has also been affirmed with great confidence of the subliminal self. Even the secondary selves of the psychological analysis have been taken in all seriousness as a group of co-ordinate individuals. And the theory has at least this advantage over the foregoing that it calls in mind to explain the

[1] *Mind*, vol. xxxi. pp. 413 ff. *Cf.* H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*, chap. xi.
[2] *Human Personality*, 1903, i. p. 15.

occurrence of events which bear the hall-mark of mind. But in the main it has against it the witness of consciousness. When we distinguish between our higher and lower selves, and also between their various modifications, it is with the feeling that there is a large amount of make-believe, and with the conviction that we possess a self which, as compared with these secondary selves, has a unique degree of reality as well as an exclusive burden of responsibility. When one of the so-called secondary selves displaces another in our experience, what occurs is felt to be, not the dispossession of one personality by another, but rather a change such as a man undergoes when he passes from business to pleasure, or from town to the coast, or from his native land to a foreign country. The secondary selves, further, differ from human individuals in that they are so closely interrelated and even interwoven, that they make use to a large extent of the same mental machinery and build on the same experiences and memories. The most that can be said is that disintegration into a multiplicity of real personalities is one of the grim possibilities of the development of a human being. That such a disintegration is a possibility is established by the fact that persons exist, outside as well as inside lunatic asylums, who, when judged by the recognised criterion of temperament, intellectual powers and moral principles, would appear to have been broken up into a community of individuals. And it may well be that it is the doom of the undisciplined and chaotic soul to undergo a gradual dissociation culminating in a total dissolution of personality, and that in the long run the various tendencies will mature into an association of quarrelsome and vindictive creatures held together in a compulsory partnership, as on the other hand it is

the destiny of the good man to unify his spiritual state by establishing the unquestioned supremacy of his higher self and its maxims over the turbulent and seditious elements that plot and agitate for the dismemberment of the kingdom of his soul.

(*d*) According to the intellectualist theory, as we may term the doctrine of the schools, the extraordinary phenomena are sufficiently accounted for by the same conscious subject, and by the same kind of operations, which account for the phenomena of ordinary experience. 'My thoughts and actions and feelings,' says Reid, 'change every moment—they have no continued, but a successive existence; but that self or I to which they belong is permanent, and has the same relation to all succeeding thoughts, actions and feelings which I call mine.'[1] It is held to be self-evident that any thoughts or volitions welling up in consciousness must be products of mind, and that they must be products of the only mind which is in sight—viz., the mind of the individual which psychologists and plain folk have hitherto been at one in recognising. If we discover in consciousness results which we do not readily acknowledge as ours, the absence of the sense of ownership is explained by the circumstance that we do not give the same attention to all the things which we do, or equally remember all that we have done, and that the results of thinking are often carried over when the processes have been carelessly observed and forgotten. The phenomena of the split personality, it is added, are rare, and have been exaggerated from an inclination to heap up dramatic effects; and no substantial problem is left when allowance has been made for the far-reaching consequences of a partial disablement of memory,

[1] *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, III. chap. iv.

and for the effect upon the mind of a radical derangement of the bodily instrument.[1] But while most of the phenomena may be thus accounted for, there remains a strong case, if not for an alternative, at least for a supplementary explanation. For there has been a large and consentient body of religious opinion to the effect that men have found in their minds ideas, convictions and resolutions—and these the best of its contents—which were not the products of their own mental activity.

2. The transcendent theory, as it may be conveniently termed, breaks with the foregoing group in that it explains extraordinary events of the inner life by the intervention of other spiritual beings akin to man. Emergent ideas, impulses, and purposes which are of high moment, and marked by unusual strength and vivacity, have been interpreted as communications from other minds which had their home outside of the individual soul. These influences have been attributed to finite spirits, or to the Infinite Spirit, or to both. And the spirits holding communion with men have also been distinguished as good and evil. In the highest religions the chief stress has been laid on the activities of the Divine Spirit, which has been regarded as the source both of intellectual gifts of illumination and of sanctifying and moralising energies. This attitude is conspicuously illustrated in the Old Testament religion. The inherited belief in the accessibility of the human mind to the other spirits was ' increasingly concentrated into belief in accessibility to the spirit of Yahweh.' [2] To the Spirit of God were ascribed gifts of many kinds,

[1] For a summary of the arguments see Maher, *Psychology*, 1911, pp. 489 ff.

[2] Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, 1911, p. 10.

including prudence and artistic skill, but specially the inspiration which gave to the prophet knowledge of God and of His will, and insight into the meaning of His mighty works in nature and history. The prophets also recognised gifts of God in the piety and the virtues of His saints. The Messiah was described as clothed by the Spirit of the Lord with wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord, righteousness and faithfulness (Is. xi. 2). The New Testament teaching represents the highest Christian experience as consisting in the interpenetration of the human personality by the divine—the commingling being described as being filled with the Spirit, and as an inhabitation by the glorified Christ and by the Father, while the holy enthusiasm and energies of the Church were similarly interpreted as due to the presence of a personal presence and working of God in the soul of the Christian community.[1] And the same conception—that in the deepest experience there is a mystic interfusion of minds and wills—was confidently taken over by Christian Theology. It has been axiomatic that the Christian salvation rested on a special self-disclosure of God in the minds of prophets, and a special presence in the incarnate Son, that its sacred books were the product of divine inspiration, and that from generation to generation its saving doctrines have been understood by the help of the ministrations of the Spirit of truth. It has also, as we saw, been the deep-seated conviction of the Christian society that the experiences of conversion and sanctification are in a unique sense the act or the work of God. The conviction that in the great experiences the human spirit was the habitation and workshop of a divine person was

[1] Gal. ii. 20, v. 18 ; John xiv. 23 ; Eph. v. 26.

still further emphasised by the dogmatic affirmation, of which the foundation had been laid in the Pauline and the Johannine writings, of the personality of the Holy Spirit.

In the higher religions there has been a recognition of the influence upon man of finite spirits other than human, but the tendency was to limit it, and especially to restrict the range and the efficiency of evil spirits. The period of Animism and Polydaemonism was the golden age of the undivine spirits. The most characteristic tenet of this stage is that ghosts and demons—among whom the capricious and the malignant largely preponderate—find entrance to the human soul in dreams and delirium, while most of the diseases to which flesh and mind are heir are diagnosed as effects of demoniac visitation or possession. But the spirits, if they had had the gift of prophecy, would have testified like John the Baptist : ' He must increase and we must decrease.' The animistic beliefs, indeed, have generally held their ground as cherished articles of a popular creed, and from time to time they have shown amazing powers of recrudescence, but in the great religions measures have been taken to prevent too much being made of good spirits, and especially to reduce the evil spirits to ineffectiveness. In the case of the evil spirits this has been accomplished in the three ways of ostracising them, of subjugating them, and of doubting or denying their existence. The gifted Aryans were disposed to the method of ostracism. Adoring the shining Gods who reflected the dazzling glories and the majestic movements of the firmament, their inclination was to keep the world of spirits at arm's length. ' The bright Homeric world,' says Rohde, though perhaps too confidently, ' was liberated from nocturnal

visitants, from the mysterious goblin operations of the souls of the dead before whose uncanny doings superstition has trembled throughout the ages. The living had peace from the dead.'[1] The method of subjugation is represented by the Old and New Testament Scriptures. They confess, indeed, the activities of a spirit world, and there was a movement of thought which went on to portray in ever darker colours and more dreadful characters the powers of darkness. The New Testament has an elaborated doctrine of Satan as the head of a hierarchy of principalities and powers, and as the source both of the violent and crafty opposition with which the Kingdom of God has to reckon in the world, and of the wicked imaginations and the violent and subtle temptations by which men are continually beset. It was also taken for granted that unclean spirits work havoc in the bodies and the souls of men. But the vital feature was that God had this dark menacing realm in hand: it could do nothing save by His permission, it was subject to His checks and restraints, and it was embraced within the scope of His over-ruling Providence. The third method—which disposes of the question by disbelieving in the spirits—has been adopted by the world of modern culture, and is generally favoured in modern Protestant Theology.

The transcendent theory in all its forms is ruled out by Psychology as a hypothesis which Science must decline to consider. But while it is entitled to delimit its field, and to specify the kind of causes which it is prepared to recognise, it is quite possible, as was before observed, that it comes upon facts which have their explanations in forces belonging to a different realm of existence. It may be that Science, besides splendidly

[1] *Psyche*, [2], 1898, i. p. 11.

exemplifying the love of truth, and fearlessness in its quest, has also been influenced by a very human prejudice. For there is in man a deep-seated impulse which leads him to form such a picture of his world and of its arrangements that he shall feel quite at home in it, and which has made him endeavour to gain dominion over the creatures in a mental way as well as in a practical fashion. He has done this on the intellectual side by framing concepts and formulating laws which help to deliver his mind from the overwhelming impression made by the vastness of the contents of the universe, and also by using standards of value which enable him to confine his attention to the persons and the events which strike him as important, and make it possible to avoid the stupefying impression that would be made by the attempt to realise crowded millenniums of past time. Similarly it is desired to bring the realm of human experience within human apprehension and control, and repugnance and even resentment are felt at the notion that the soul may be invaded by forces which can no more be located in an ordered system of human knowledge than they can be mastered and directed by the will of man. But when a wider view is taken it must be said that the transcendent theory is plausible. Members of the human species have found it possible to penetrate into one another's minds by the use of various means—as speech, writing, and example—whereby they enlighten the intellects, stir the feelings and sway the wills of others; and if different orders of spiritual beings exist, it is very credible that they also have avenues of approach to and means of communication with mankind. And if there exists an Infinite Being who is also the living God, it seems absurd to deny that He is prevented from holding gracious communion with finite spirits

because this would disarrange the scientific scheme of thought. Such intervention is certainly possible : the only question is whether there is evidence which proves it, or at least makes it credible.

That events have occurred in the human soul, and occur even now, which are most reasonably attributed to a special divine operation, is a thesis which has been maintained in Christian Apologetics. The contents of the higher forms of religious experience, it has been said, have been so extraordinary that they can only be explained by the miraculous intervention of the God of light and grace. The Biblical doctrine of God, it was contended, is of such sublimity and originality, and its doctrine of man, as Pascal emphasised, is at once so self-evidently true and so unacceptable to human pride, that they must needs be ascribed to the wisdom of a divine teacher ; while the transformations of character wrought in conversion have been confidently declared, as by the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, to be indubitable manifestations of the intervention of God. But this argument is not conclusive to the purely ratiocinative mind ; for it rests on the assumption that we are able to say what precisely human nature is and what it is not capable of, in the endeavour after truth and goodness ; and it seems to be precarious, in view of the divine elements in man's constitution, to draw a line marking the utmost possible limit of human achievement in these particulars. How, for example, can we positively know that the religious genius of the Hebrew peoples was incapable of giving birth without special inspiration to Old Testament prophecy, or that spiritual forces dormant in the soul of St. Augustine were insufficient to bring about his conversion ? In view of this difficulty it has been the commoner

opinion that the existence of divine grace and its operation in the soul are only known by revelation, and that the reality of revelation must be established by other proofs, notably the so-called external evidences of miracles and prophecy.[1] When the question is dealt with from the empirical side it may be admitted that it is impossible to demonstrate divine causality in the events of religious experience before a scientific committee, or before the popular jury to which Paley confidently referred the question of the New Testament miracles. It is, however, a question whether the case under consideration does not fall to be dealt with by a tribunal which has the character of a court of spiritual experts; and when it has been carried to such a court we find that a judgment has been given confidently affirming the reality of a special life and activity of God in the souls of spiritual men, and has been accompanied by reasons in support of the verdict.

The chief ground on which the affirmation of a divine causality rests is that the deepest spiritual experience is inseparably bound up with the conviction that it has been wrought by God. This conviction may be discounted by outsiders as a private or sectional opinion, which in consequence is wanting in an essential note of truth, but at least those who have had the experience are unable to think otherwise. This line of argument was familiar to the Reformers. The subject of the essential Christian experience, as was observed, is equally conscious of two facts—that he has been radically changed, and that the change was produced by another than himself. So inextricably are the two things associated that if he ceased to believe

[1] Leclerc, *Archives de Psychologie*, 1910, ix. pp. 241 ff. *La Vanité de l'Expérience religieuse.*

that the experience was due to a higher power he would be in danger of lapsing into the natural condition. And further, he is compelled to think of this regenerating power of God as a holy and loving will; for his experience is an ethical one, and could only be wrought by an ethical personality. To this may be added that the higher type of Christian subject lives in communion with a power which is felt to give the same evidence of personal interest and individualising love that is given in the relations of parent with child and of friend with friend. But with what right, it is asked, is this gracious power identified with the infinite and eternal God? Why might it not be some gracious finite spirit—an angelic being? It has been replied that it is an absolute experience, and that it is therefore properly referred to the Absolute as the cause [1]—which may be regarded as a version of the older argument that if a soul which is dead is quickened into life it must be due to the Infinite God, one of whose incommunicable predicates is that He is the Creator. But probably the chief reason for the inexpugnable conviction of the reality of divine influence is that the human spirit is so constituted that the presence and the power of God strike chords in the soul other than those which make response to objects and events of the natural world—that it knows the divine when it meets it, and recognises in the experiences of illumination and sanctification the hall-mark of the divine handiwork.

Is there equal reason for holding that the human soul is accessible to the influence of a Devil? The older Theology was as dogmatic about the Devil and his works as about God and His grace, and it may be

[1] Frank, *System der christlichen Gewissheit*, 1870. *Cf.* Frommel, *La Vérité Humaine*, 1915; *L'Expérience Chrétienne*, 1916.

thought that modern Theology, in throwing over one of the two schemes of thought, or at least in allowing it to fall into desuetude, has been terrorised into inconsistency by the spirit of the age. But such a criticism is not wholly justified. The belief in diabolic agency has real supports in experience—notably in the fact that the possession of a plan of campaign by the powers of darkness is forcibly suggested by many historical events, and that the temptations with which individual men are continually beset have an appearance of being manipulated by some power that shows great astuteness as well as unwearied pertinacity. There are, however, differences of vital importance between the evidence for the Devil and the evidence for God. The sympathies of the modern theologian, to begin with, were alienated from the doctrine of devils by the observation that the belief had wrought much evil in the Church, as well as in the world. It could also be contended that diabolic agency was a superfluous mechanism. Christian Theology had always attributed much importance to the immanent factors of hereditary depravity and acquired evil habitudes, and it was naturally thought that the principle of parsimony called for a simplification of the causal explanation of human sinfulness. Moreover, the traditional doctrine of the Devil was found to involve grave psychological difficulties. Was it possible that a being possessed of the highest degree of intelligence should persevere in a course of rebellion against the Most High which even a fool could know would inevitably issue in hideous and eternal ruin? Was it even possible that a being in whom the elements of goodness had been completely extirpated should continue to exist, and to have at his disposal the energies that

enabled him to fill a world and even a universe with his activities? And there are deeper reasons why faith in Satan has decayed while faith in God has held its ground. Man needs God for his salvation, and he only needs the Devil to help to explain why salvation is desperately needed. Above all, if man is of God and for God, as he is not of the Devil and for the Devil—as may well be believed—it was only to be expected that faith in God would be reinforced and fortified, as the diabolic doctrine is not, by a corroborative testimony issuing from the deeps of the human soul.

There remains the question as to the interposition of classes of finite spirits, human and non-human, good and evil, in human affairs. Such agency is an ontological possibility—however unpalatable it may be to the scientific mind; and the only question is as to the amount and weight of the evidence. There is some evidence supporting the belief, which has been widespread in the religious world, that there are beneficent powers of an angelic order which have a terrestrial sphere of influence. A great deal has happened in the history of what may be called the elect nations which favours the doctrine that each has been under the care of a tutelary spirit, and there is much in the individual life which makes it easy to believe in the kindly attentions of a guardian angel. On the other hand, the facts may seem to be adequately accounted for from the materialistic standpoint by coincidence and good fortune, and from the religious standpoint by the doctrine of a divine Providence which achieves particular results by working with an over-ruling power and wisdom through natural forces and laws, and by the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that gives guidance and help proportioned

to the needs of those who wait upon God. In regard to the spiritualistic phenomena I have not been able to form an opinion which is of any value. The modest investigations which I have made have been suspended in an access of distaste and suspicion. It may be that the earthly domain is subject to irruptions from a realm of departed spirits; but what is certain is that the general life of the race has been placed on an isolated and stable footing, and that any such invasions count for no more from the spiritual point of view than the advent of the comet or the earthquake-shock count for in the every-day life of mankind. The Power which placed man upon this planet furnished him with the rational endowment that was needed to cope with the normal difficulties of his situation, and to give him dominion over the creatures; and it is also credible that, as taught in the Christian Gospel, this was supplemented by a dispensation of grace which can give him the victory over the forces of sorrow, sin and death which must ever prove stronger than man. But it seems clear that intercourse with the spirits of the dead does not enter into the general plan under which the human race has grappled with the situation and the individual has had to live his life on earth. It may be that there will be a widespread revival of the belief that there is a realm of departed spirits which is able to give signs of its existence; but if so it may be expected that mankind will come to realise anew the wisdom of the warning which the great religions have been at one in giving and enforcing against reliance on subterranean traffic with the dead.

# CHAPTER V

## THE RELIGIOUS MIND

EVERY religion which has been well received by mankind, and has won for itself lasting respect and influence, has claimed to be a vehicle of enlightenment. Its doctrine has been preserved in various ways—in an oral tradition, in a collection of sacred books, in the condensed form of a Creed or Confession, and in theological systems ; while it has been propagated through the exercises of worship, by teaching and preaching, and by a multifarious dependent or secondary literature. And an immense amount of thinking has been done about divine things. The ordinary man has thought more about religion, at least until lately, than about any other subject not immediately connected with his occupation or with his domestic and social life. With the saints religious knowledge has usually been a deep and constant preoccupation, second only to the possession of the supreme blessing of union with God which it mirrored and promoted. The converts have also been deeply interested in the doctrines that were bound up with their experience ; and the learned class of disciples has shown a tendency to concentrate upon the theoretical aspects of their religion, and to make the pursuit of divine knowledge a substitute for such weightier matters as the forgiveness of their sins, the sanctification of their souls, and the advancement of the Kingdom of God. The intellectual zeal of the

disciple has been notable in all schools of religious thought — Brahmanist, Buddhist, Rabbinical, Mohammedan, and Christian, but it has its most imposing monument in Christian Theology, which during sixty generations has devoted immeasurable time and labour to the task of understanding, developing and defending the doctrinal inheritance. The dissemination of religious knowledge has also been undertaken with great diligence and perseverance. There have indeed been periods when even the Christian Church has ceased to think it necessary to impart much instruction to the members of its household—the needs of the case being supposed to be met by the administration of sacred rites, and by the submission of mind and will to the voice of ecclesiastical authority. But at least the great ages of Christianity have been marked by a passion for the propagation of the truth, both at home and abroad ; and the same has held good of Buddhism and Islam, which in their original programme shared with Christianity the insistence on the necessity of instruction, as well as the aggressive missionary note. During the nineteenth century, and as much as has passed of the twentieth, the propagation of Christian teaching has proceeded, in the face of hostility and indifference, on an extending scale, and with no appearance of waning confidence. In Great Britain on one day in every seven there are delivered tens of thousands of sermons and addresses in which it is sought to give some instruction concerning the realities and the powers of an invisible world, and the nature and provisions of salvation, accompanied by rules for the conduct of life which rest on this theoretical basis ; while there have been sent forth other thousands of teachers by whom the same theological and ethical ideas are conveyed to the nations and tribes of every

colour and tongue, and of every grade of barbarism and civilisation, which have excited compassion by reason of their ignorance of divine truth, and of the moral and physical evils which their ignorance has brought in its train. And in reflecting on this extraordinary activity it is natural to ask what are the qualifications that man has brought to the task of religious thinking which he has found to be so engrossing, and which he has believed to be of so tremendous importance.

To the modern philosophical schools it has seemed evident that before any attempt is made to set forth a system of truth an investigation should be held with a view to decide what the human mind is fitted to achieve. And this seems the obvious and sensible course. When a person forms a project of any kind —say to build a bridge, or write a novel, or reform his ways—the first question that we ask is whether it is desirable, and the second whether it is within his powers. In the speculative field this inquiry seemed the more necessary in view of the dissonance of the results that had been reached by the seekers after truth, and modern Philosophy therefore became primarily Epistemology. The powers and the scope of the intellectual instrument formed the central interest of the English School in the development from Locke to Hume; and the work was continued by Kant, who set himself 'to determine the limits of the use of the understanding with a view to ascertain what lies within or without its sphere,' and 'whether certain questions are or are not within its horizon.' Especially when the matter in question has been the existence, the attributes and the predicates of the invisible God, it has naturally been thought that it was a first duty to take stock of the equipment that man

possesses for carrying out the enterprise, and that if it could be shown that the instrument is useless or inadequate, it was a dictate both of wisdom and duty to abandon the undertaking. On the other hand, there is a familiar train of experience which may make us distrustful of antecedent estimates of human capacity. Common sense warns us not to attempt what is beyond us, but it also has the dictum that we do not know what we can do until we try. Individuals are constantly doing things, and doing them well, which those who knew them best, including themselves, did not believe to be within their powers. Our forefathers were quite sure that it was impossible for man, unless his human powers were reinforced by calling in the black arts, to flash a message to the other side of the globe, and hear people speaking hundreds of miles away ; and the question has been disposed of by the thing being done. Mistakes may be made in two ways as to the limits within which the human intellect can do effective work. The range of the powers which lie open to investigation may be underestimated. And there may be elements of the mental constitution, not immediately patent, which have co-operated with the conscious endeavours of the human subject to reach out and apprehend a world of divine reality. It must therefore be deemed a fortunate circumstance that in earlier times it was the practice of philosophers, as well as of prophets and apostles, to ignore the question of what the mind is fitted to achieve, and rather to make trial of what could be accomplished by attempting to use it. The world is certainly much richer, and doubtless also wiser, because the ancients cultivated Ontology rather than the Theory of Knowledge, and proceeded on the footing that if they proclaimed doctrines which could in some way be recognised and

commended as truths, it was unnecessary to make trouble about the competency of the instrument.

In this chapter we shall take stock of the ordinary cognitive powers which have been employed in man's intellectual relations with the religious objects, and thereafter we shall consider the manifestations of mental life which have been associated with the more intense and elevated forms of spiritual experience.

## I

As a religious subject man has obviously applied himself to divine things with the full and undivided use of the recognised constituents of his mental life. His occupation with religion has involved cognition, feeling, and conation. He has had knowledge of God and divine things, he has felt about them, and they have been the object and the spring of aspirations and strivings. On the cognitive side every element has come into play that figures in the psychological inventory—sensation, perception, imagination, memory, and intellection. There has been a use for perception and even for sensation since the realm of the divine has included finite objects and events which reveal the presence and the power, or serve the uses of the Deity—as holy things, holy places, holy persons, and the events of sacred history. By far the most important branch of the intellectual labour, however, is that which has been concerned with the being, the attributes, and the works of God. This has been the business of thinking proper, involving understanding and reason, which Dr. Ward prefers to term intellection. Professor Stout declares his agreement with Brentano, who distinguished three different ways in which consciousness refers to an

object—viz. presentation, when we are simply aware of an object as a content of consciousness; judgment or belief, when we affirm or deny the object; and interest, when we have desire or aversion towards it.[1] A good case can also be made out for giving a co-ordinate place to reasoning. Otherwise expressed, we may say that the doings of the intellect are four—by way of comprehension, by way of conviction, by way of appreciation and by way of ratiocination or argumentation. And when the intellect has been addressed to religious thinking it has naturally done its work in these characteristic ways.

1. (*a*) The comprehending mind, or the understanding, has manipulated the materials in its characteristic fashion. The data of the sacred realm have been laid hold of by the same methods as the data of other fields, and have been subjected to the same processes of noetic synthesis. Every system of theological ideas—the simplest as well as the most elaborate—is found to have been built up by the use of the categories of the understanding. It is true that the conviction has been repeatedly expressed from the religious side that we have no categories at our disposal, or at least none that are adequate, for the definition of the Divine Being; but in the case of the crudest as well as of the most etherealised faiths there has always been some theoretical material which it has been found possible and necessary to cast in the moulds of the comprehending mind. The theistic doctrine of God reveals an extensive use of the ideas or principles of the understanding which are enumerated in Kant's scheme of the categories. The definition of the Divine Being as the infinite involves the use of the category of negation, by which

[1] *Analytical Psychology*, 1896, i. p. 40.

it is denied that He is subject to limitations and defects. The affirmation that God is necessarily existent involves the use of a category of modality. In declaring that God is one the theist employs the category of unity, while the polytheist applies the category of plurality. The elements of the divine attributes, as was taught by the Scholastics, are on the one hand things which are known in experience—notably power, wisdom, goodness—and on the other principles of the understanding—notably the principles of eminency or absolute perfection, negation, and causality, by means of which we are enabled to rise to some apprehension of the divine perfections. The application to the Divine Being of the category of causality further yields the conception of God as the Creator, the Preserver, and the Governor of the world.

The forms of the understanding have necessarily been used to some extent by every type of the religious subject. The prophetic personality, whatever might be the range of his vision and the source of his experiences, had still to make use of the intellectual mechanism of human nature ; and he had also, if his gospel was not to return unto him void, to address himself to the understanding of his fellow-men. The learned classes of the converts have conspicuously set themselves to satisfy the demands of the understanding. It is by them that Theology, as distinguished from religion, has been cultivated ; and Theology, while it has remembered that it had a duty of edification, has on the whole been the creation of the kind of mind which is bent on the comprehension of things. Christian Theology has largely done its work with the aim of satisfying intellectual aspirations, and has followed the same lines in which intellectual

satisfaction has been sought in the investigation of other fields. It undertook to satisfy the demand for full knowledge—and this it did on the one hand by drawing out additional truths which were found to be implicit in the accepted deposit of doctrine, on the other by supplying explanations of momentous truths, such as the sinfulness and misery of man's estate, or the great redemptive facts of the Incarnation and the Atonement. It further aimed at furnishing accurate knowledge ; and this was accomplished by formulating the capital dogmas, and also the particular subordinate doctrines, with the highest degree of precision that could be attained by the employment of scientific modes of thought and expression. The need was also felt for articulated knowledge, and the doctrines of every branch of the Church have been systematised by the use either of the synthetic or of the analytic principle of arrangement, and with careful consideration of the relation of each doctrine to the cognate articles, and to the system as a whole.

(*b*) Conviction or belief has shown peculiar features in the transactions of the mind with religious objects, and the need has been felt of some distinctive nomenclature. The affirmative judgment as to the reality of the objects has a special name in many languages, and is known in our tongue as faith. The negative judgment has been described by terms which, like scepticism and infidelity, have carried with them a suggestion of the gravity of the denial, and also of the popular disfavour with which it has been regarded. Yet while it has been agreed to give the name of faith to the affirming attitude of the religious subject, it has not been found easy to say wherein precisely faith differs from knowledge. The two are sometimes conceived as merely representing

different degrees of certainty. When we know, some would say, we are sure; when we have faith we are not quite sure. But it is clearly not an essential of faith to be lacking in confidence: its characteristic utterance is not, 'I think it likely,' but rather, 'I am persuaded.' They have also been distinguished as concerned with different classes of objects: faith is directed, it is said, to things unseen, knowledge to the things which are apprehended through the senses. But there are objects of faith which have been manifestations of God in the world of sense and time—*e.g.* the miracles and the resurrection of Christ; and there are matters of scientific knowledge—*e.g.* the atom, the electron, and the world-ether—which lie outside the range of sense-perception. They have been distinguished, again, by reference to the grounds on which the conviction rests, or on which the reality of the object is affirmed. Faith, it used to be held, depends on testimony, while knowledge is supported by first-hand observation or experience. But the spiritual man declares that his faith is verified by, and even that it is rooted in, his personal experience, and on the other hand by far the greater part of the knowledge which men are assured that they possess has been derived from the testimony of others. It has often been maintained that knowledge consists of propositions which can be proved, while faith dispenses with grounds and reasons—being essentially of the nature of an irrational venture. But faith always rests on some definable foundation, and there is one form of faith which consciously rests on a foundation of reasoning. Pratt has distinguished three leading types of faith—the servile faith, often called primitive credulity, whose reason for believing is that it is so required by authority and custom; the emotional

faith which draws its strength from the field of vital feeling; and as a third type 'intellectual or reasoned belief.' [1] The most distinctive feature of faith seems to be the blending of a volitional element with the intellectual element. When the object of faith is a person the assent of the intellect, as was emphasised by the Reformers, deepens into trust. When the object is a truth, the true believer identifies himself with it in a special way, and maintains it with an emphasis similar to that which accompanies his guardianship of his other personal possessions.

(*c*) The appreciative attitude which is inspired by interest or liking has been strongly fostered by the objects that are proposed to the mind by religion. In support of this observation it is sufficient to refer to what has already been said of the blessings promised in religion, and of the manifoldness of the instincts to which its appeal has been addressed. Since the most constant undertaking of religion has been to protect and advance the most vital interests of the individual and of the race, and since in addition it has made demands upon man in the name of duty, has shown him divine beings that claimed his love, and has stirred his curiosity, it is not surprising that the whole field should have been found to be full of interest, and that religious indifference should have been an exceptional and transitory phenomenon. There are other circumstances which have made it seem of special interest to particular classes: aesthetic natures have been attracted to religion as a realm of heavenly beauties and sublimities, and parents have valued it as the most effectual means in sight for

[1] *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, 1907, p. 40. These practically coincide with the three types distinguished by Delacroix: la foi implicite, la foi confiance, la foi raisonnante. *La Religion et la Foi*, 1922, livre i.

forming the character of their children, and safeguarding them against the worst of the perils of the world.

(*d*) Finally, religion has afforded infinite scope for the reasoning processes of intellect. The religious mind has been an indefatigable reasoner. At the same time its reasoning has been mainly of the apologetic and polemical kind. It has followed the procedure of Logic, deductive and inductive, but its presupposition has been that its capital conclusions were antecedently certain, and its ratiocination has been largely directed to finding rational justification or corroboration for positions which were already occupied by faith. That religious reasoning is essentially apologetic is the necessary implication of the fact that it is conducted by persons who have faith. Belief, as Stout points out, involves a limitation of mental activity. 'In so far as we are left free to think otherwise than we do think, belief is absent; in so far as it is present, the range of subjective selection is confined within definite limits.'[1] A faith which was unlimitedly inquiring, and for which everything was an open question, would be as much of a contradiction as a circle which had the properties of a square. For the believing man there may be many open questions in the religious field, but to that extent his faith is put in suspense. The nature of the matters dealt with in religious thought makes it inevitable that the mind should be strongly disposed to apologetic reasoning, and that it should be influenced by what Ribot has called the logic of the sentiments. To demand in Theology the utterly disinterested thinking which has no prepossessions is to require what is known to be a psychological impossibility in other relations in which vital interests are at stake, or in which the

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 239.

affections are deeply engaged. A parent does not form a judicial opinion of the talents and the character of a child; the same holds in friendship; in politics the opinions of the majority seem to be dictated by a combination of interest and sentiment; while in the dealings and wranglings of the nations with one another it would be thought to be unnatural and indeed blameworthy if the judgment of a statesman on a question of culpability, and even on an economic situation, did not reflect his love of his country and his devotion to its interests. And the same influences have inevitably affected the reasoning, and made it apologetic in aim, when a human being has possessed in his God and Saviour an object that was beloved with a love comparable to that for wife or child, when he has believed that in his religion he enjoyed the firstfruits as well as the promise of a salvation which transcended any well-being that can be built up out of the goods of this world, and when a Church has taken its place along with his earthly fatherland in the deepest recesses of his heart. Nor does it follow that because such theological bias is inevitable, the outcome is necessarily misleading—that the logic of the sentiments is a euphemism for sophistical reasoning. It is a very tenable view that man is entitled to do reasoning on the assumption that the true interests of a being made in the image of God have been safeguarded both in time and in eternity, and that in its highest forms love has been given to man, not as a conspirator against reason, but as a forerunner which gives to it guidance and help in laying hold of the truths that are of vital importance for blessedness and destiny. At the same time it is only just to point out that the ratiocinative intellect has acted as a constant check upon the interested and emotional

thinking to which faith is predisposed. Of this intellectual censorship two examples may be cited from the history of Christian Theology. In the early Christian centuries it was a widespread tenet that Jesus Christ was the same person as God the Father; but though this bold tenet seemed to promise greater security to the Christian salvation, and also to give greater glory to the Saviour, it was rejected by the Church on the rational grounds that it was inconsistent with the historical evidence, and that it involved insuperable speculative difficulties. In the post-Reformation period Protestant Theology affirmed the mechanical and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and this doctrine was commended by the fact that it effectually served the interests of Protestantism in its conflict with Rome, while it also paid the highest conceivable tribute to the sacred book; but the laborious investigations of Biblical scholarship made it appear that the doctrine was contrary to the evidence, and it has come to be generally agreed that, whatever polemical disadvantages it may entail, and whatever pain and concern it may give to devout souls, Theology has to content itself with a Word of God which is a treasure in earthen vessels, and for which absolute inerrancy cannot be claimed. Again, while the mind which has faith cannot but seek to justify its beliefs, an adjoining territory has always been recognised in which the inquiring intellect is entitled to liberty in the pursuit of knowledge. Modern Theology is acquiring all the freedom that can be expected in criticism and speculation unless we are to make the assumption that, abandoning all the presuppositions of faith, it should cease to be Theology and be merged in Philosophy and Science. And even then it would find that it was limited by postulates and expected to defend some foregone conclusions.

The intellect, then, has grappled with religion in its characteristic way, and the question is whether it has an equipment adequate to the task. According to the Empirical School of Philosophy there is nothing, and can be nothing, in the mind except the impressions that are received through the channels of sense, with the various combinations of these that are effected through the association of ideas; and in consistency therewith it has been held that man is debarred from the knowledge, even if such exist, of a supersensible realm. Kant repudiated this account of the genesis of knowledge, and made good the position that, while sense-experience is the occasion of mental activity, the most important contribution to the body of knowledge is that which is made by the mind itself in reacting to the impressions and organising the results. To this, however, Kant added that the competence of the understanding is confined to the phenomenal world, and that any knowledge of transcendental realities which it is supposed to give is illusory. 'The understanding *a priori*,' he says, 'can never do more than anticipate the form of a possible experience, and since that which is not phenomenon cannot be the object of experience, it can never overstep the limits of sensibility within which alone objects are given. Its principles are merely principles for the exposition of phenomena, and the proud name of an ontology to which it presumes must give way to the modest name of an analytic of the pure understanding.' When there is no empirical object or content, 'there can be nothing but a play of the imagination, or the understanding with their respective presentations.'[1] On these terms the reasoning by which Natural Theology has

[1] *Werke*, Bd. iii. (Berl. Ausg.), 1904, p. 205 ff.

sought to rise to God is foredoomed to failure, inasmuch as it largely relies on the principle of causality which has no validity outside the world of space and time. And not only does this vitiate all reasoning which seems to reach God, but all theological thinking is deceptive, since every part of the theistic doctrine, as was seen, involves the use of a category. Though this criticism has been widely accepted as final, one may take courage to think that the reasoning is not entitled to the confidence which has been reposed in it. In substance, the critical argument is that the understanding employs its categories to do useful and necessary work in the phenomenal sphere, and that therefore they are not serviceable for work in the transcendental sphere. But surely this is not convincing. It has analogy against it, for it is written on the face of the story of human development that instruments and powers which were evolved for lower uses have turned out to be available in other and higher capacities. The human intelligence was primarily concerned with hunting, fishing, and fighting, but it turned out to have also a vocation in the pursuit of Science and the cultivation of Philosophy. The human tongue was doubtless evolved to give guidance, protection, and pleasure in the business of eating and drinking, but later on it proved to be capable of serving as the instrument of intelligent speech and of swaying the mind of crowds and nations. In similar fashion the sexual instinct, which came into existence to ensure the propagation of the species under conditions that ensure variety as well as continuity, became the foundation of the virtues and the sanctities of the home, and also of the passion in which the poet and the novelist have found the chiefest examples of romantic and self-sacrificing devotion. And similarly

it must be thought not only possible but probable that man, while primarily possessing the categories of the understanding to enable him to take intellectual possession of the objects and forces of the natural world, has found that they could be used to establish similar relations with a world of supersensible realities. The Kantian objection falls to the ground if it can be shown that in any one case the mind has broken through the screen of mere appearance. This seems to have been done in the important matter of knowing our self, which, according to Kant, is, equally with God, beyond the reach of the understanding. And the assertion that God cannot be known because of the limitations of our faculties is directly challenged by the religious conviction that as a matter of fact man knows God even as he is known of God. It is inconceivable that Isaiah or Paul, even if they could have studied the *Critique of Pure Reason*, would have admitted that they had been mistaken in supposing that their faculties could reach so far as the Divine Being, and could know His purposes of judgment and mercy. And not less may ordinary people think it unreasonable that they should be asked on antecedent grounds to distrust and abandon ideas about the Divine Being of whose truth they feel deeply convinced, and which after being tested in their experience of success and failure, joy and sorrow, and all the mingled glory and terror of human existence, still seem to them to be entirely credible, and even more credible than before they were thus drastically put to the proof.

2. The religious mind, while it has been bent on understanding things, has also made large use of the imagination. This has been exemplified in general by its preference for concrete as distinguished from abstract

conceptions. Though its interest centres in a world of super-sensible realities, it has been impelled to do its thinking in terms of a world replete with shape, colour and movement. It prefers the image or the *Anschauung*, as Hegel puts it, to the notion or the *Begriff*; and even when its thinking has been most earnest and profound it has been disposed to avail itself of the imaginative forms. This predilection for concrete conceptions has been common to the lower and the higher types of the religious subject. The strength of heathenism has lain largely in the fascination exercised by the idol and the sacrifice, which give the divine a manifestation and a footing in the world of sensible realities. It is a familiar theme of apologetics that Christianity made the perfect provision for the satisfaction of a universally felt need when 'the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.' When the event of the divine life on earth grew remote in time as well as in space, Roman Catholicism made a further provision for bringing the divine object within the sphere of the seen and temporal by the use of the image and the crucifix, and especially by the sacred rite which it interprets as a repetition of the Incarnation and of the sacrifice that was offered on Calvary. Protestantism condemned images, but found it was impossible to dispense with their mental equivalents; and the great evangelical doctrines became popular in the form in which redemption was thought of in terms of the Cross and of the sacrificial blood, and the Christ enthroned in bodily form was worshipped as God. Preachers expound and argue, Vinet declared, because they cannot narrate, or at least because they have not imitated the method of the God of the Christian Revelation who, knowing what is in man, gave

the gospel to the world in the form of a history. Nor may it be said that religious thinking ceases to be profound when it is concrete. Plato took for granted that poetry was the proper vehicle in which to discourse of God and divine things: he thought that the choice lay between the hymn, the epic, and the drama, and he himself laid aside his dialectic for the mythos when he touched on the deeper problems of existence and destiny. The saints have as a rule had the imaginative cast of mind. The mystics have commended an ideal of self-emptying which involved the purgation of the mind from sensuous representations of every kind, and its reduction to a condition of utter darkness and silence, but normally they thought and wrote as belonging to the intellectual order of the poets. The poetic way of thinking has also been characteristic of the founders and the chief apostles of the ethical religions. When the prophetic personality has been apprehended by a vision of God, and by a lofty ideal of piety and virtue, it would appear as if, owing to some mystic affinity between truth and beauty, he was at the same time put in command of the aesthetic power which enabled him both to embody his message in worthy form, and to bespeak for it an abundant entrance into the popular mind and heart. Certain at least it is that the religious genius has commonly been associated with the literary genius which found for ideas the arresting and memorable form. The sacred literature of India contains many a poetic gem. The Koran contains not a few passages of signal vividness and sublimity. The Bible, and especially the teaching of Jesus, is a striking illustration of the law under which the beautiful and effective form has been put at the disposal of the divine message, and it is noteworthy that, in the case

of the English Bible, the virtue of the contents has been able to ensure even to a translation the form of a literary classic of supreme rank.

Religious thought has borne in a marked degree the stamp of the creative imagination. Each of the great religions has supplied a picture of the universe, and its principalities and powers, and also a conception of the condition, the origin and the destiny of man, which have the character of an impressive dramatic construction. The collective mind of the natural community showed imaginative powers of a high order in the development of the myths and cosmogonies of the polytheistic stage. The Olympian gods of Greece came under censure before the moral tribunal, but they have held their place as remarkable aesthetic creations. The Scandinavian mythology—with its universe made up of Asgard, Midgard and Uitgard, and bound together by the oak Igdrasil, the girdle of the ocean-stream and the bridge Bifrost, with its wonderful character-sketches of the mighty but boyish Thor, the enigmatical Loki and Balder the beautiful, and above all with its conception of the cosmic drama that issued in Armageddon, the twilight of the gods, and the coming of a better world—this may well be thought to have been the work of a mind that had a good share of the genius that was dispensed to Dante and Milton. When Polytheism was dispossessed by higher religions its vision of the universe was replaced by others which, while they penetrated further into eternity and infinity, and had far greater intellectual and moral depth, had still an imaginative aspect. The Christian scheme of existence, salvation and destiny is entitled, apart from the sovereign question of truth, to rank as supreme among the poems that have been composed

on the greatest of all known themes—the drama of cosmical and terrestrial existence, and the place of mankind in the story.

II

There has been a widespread impression, which has been formulated in many different ways, that the natural equipment which man possesses for religious thinking includes some exceptional powers and capacities. We have already referred to one form in which this has been recognised—viz., the theory of a religious instinct. On the cognitive side, it has been held, the religious instinct involves at the least a haunting sense of the existence, and also the rich promise, of a world of divine reality. And religious experience is closely bound up with the sense of the presence of a Divine Being. This conviction is witnessed to by the very existence of the temple or house of God, which has been generally revered as the place in which the worshipper meets with God, or in which he is conscious of a peculiar presence and nearness. It was observed by Kant as well as by Chalmers, that the sense of a divine presence is commonly associated with the deepest experiences of the moral life : there is a consciousness of a Lawgiver behind the law, the temptation is accompanied by the feeling, ' Thou God seest me,' and in the mood of penitence the characteristic self-reproach is, not so much that the sinner has done what he ought not to have done, as that he has offended and grieved a holy and loving God. The spiritual experiences of conversion and sanctification are associated with the conviction that God approaches and dwells in the soul by a special presence and power.

The existence of an exceptional factor in religious thinking has been asserted in the form that man is in possession of an innate idea of God. 'The presumption that God exists,' says Calvin, 'inheres tenaciously in the bowels of us all,' and he accounts for it by the fact that 'the human mind has been naturally endowed with a knowledge of God.'[1] The doctrine was also a commonplace of the older philosophical schools. The theory was rejected by Locke—mainly on the ground that men entertain conflicting ideas about the Divine Being, and since Locke it has been generally admitted that there is no inherited stock of theological ideas.[2] Yet the principle of the theory has continued to be maintained in other settings. It was held by members of the Scottish School that man has an immediate apprehension or intuition of God, or at least that when the doctrine is explained to him it strikes him with the force of self-evidencing truth. The operation of a special principle may be said to have been recognised by Kant in his description of the idea of God as a necessary idea of reason. The idea was not, in his view, innate in the sense that it is found ready-made in the mind, but at least it was an idea which reason could not but bring forth when it got to work upon its data, and thought things out in accordance with its governing principles. It is true that Kant, after describing the steps by which reason reaches the idea of God, declared that it had made use of fallacious argument and illegitimate personification[3] —from which it would appear that the work which man's noble instrument is compelled to do, and on

[1] *Institutio*, i. 3.
[2] *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, i. 2, 4.
[3] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 'The Transcendental Ideal.'

which it does its best, is done badly. But this must be thought unlikely.

A religious factor of the intellectual life has also been recognised in the theory of a special religious sense. This theory has had wide currency in a vague popular form, and in a developed form it has recently had a remarkable vogue in Germany, owing to the influential advocacy of Troeltsch and Otto, under the more imposing name of the doctrine of the religious Apriori.[1] The Apriori, it is explained, is understood in the wider, not the more specific sense, in which it was affirmed by Kant. 'In the ethical, the religious, and the teleologico-aesthetic reason,' says Troeltsch, 'Kant recognises an Apriori, which in that case naturally signifies, not the synthetic unifying function of scientific comprehension, but the way of judging and regarding the actual under ethical, religious and teleologico-aesthetic points of view, which is a necessity for reason and proceeds in accordance with its own laws.'[2] And it is this general conception which has been revived and elaborated in its religious bearings. There is, it is explained, 'a rational kernel (*Vernunftkern*), lying behind the stream of the psychical experiences and of their connections, which radiates the Aprioris';[3] and it is through this radiation that we are disposed and enabled to discover values in the realm of empirical facts, and to affirm their validity against all criticism and gainsaying. Had man not possessed in his constitution the element of the religious Apriori he would no more have been able to compound religion out of his sense-impressions than he is able to transmute the baser metals into gold or to manufacture

[1] Troeltsch, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 1913, Bd. ii. pp. 754 ff. 'Zur Frage des religiösen A priori,' Otto, *Das Heilige*, 1923, chaps. xv., xviii.

[2] *Op. cit.*, ii. p. 758. [3] *Op. cit.*, p. 755.

something out of nothing; and it is because he still possesses this power that he may hope to seek to disengage real and abiding spiritual values from the flux and the mutations of history. Otto has attempted to define more precisely the nature of the religious Apriori, and to estimate the special contribution which it has made and continues to make at the basis of religious thinking. There is a religious category—that of the holy or the numinous—which is equally rooted in the human constitution with the ethical and the aesthetic categories. It contains rational elements such as necessity, perfection, goodness, as well as mysterious elements which are only realised in confused feeling, and cannot be embraced by the categories of the understanding. But in respect of both moments it is a purely *a priori* category. 'The numinous breaks forth out of the deepest ground of the soul itself—certainly not before, and not without mundane and sensuous circumstances and experiences, but within these and among these. The convictions and feelings are different in kind from anything that can be yielded by natural sense-perception. They are not sense-perceptions, but in the first place peculiar interpretations and valuations of sensuous data, and in the second place affirmations of objects and beings which do not belong to the world, but which in thought are added to it or placed over it. And so they point back to a secret and independent source of ideas and feelings—to a pure reason in the deepest sense of the word, which, because of the overwhelming wealth of its content, is to be distinguished as something higher and deeper than Kant's practical reason.' [1]

The doctrine of a religious sense has persisted because there are peculiar facts connected with

[1] *Das Heilige*, pp. 140-2.

the religious mind and its working which obstinately continue to force themselves on the attention. The point which seems to me to be best established is that man has a religious instinct which in its cognitive aspect is an awareness of the existence of the divine, and in its conative aspect is a Godward impulse, involving a sense of control by the divine. It also seems to be a just observation that he has a capacity for recognising the divine, which he marks off by a distinct category as belonging to the sacred sphere. The awareness of the realm of the divine, further, becomes more definite in religious experience in the sense of the presence of God, which can be deepened into a sense of intimate communion. The question is whether these things represent an integral element or elements of the human constitution, and are not adequately accounted for by early education and discipline. No doubt the impressions of childhood count for much, while every element that has been referred to, and especially the sense of the presence of God, can be cultivated and brought to a much higher pitch. But even if it were true that the individual owed to education the direction given to his sense of reverence, the question would still remain why the family, the religious group, and the national community had thought it necessary to provide such a training, and in the last resort we seem to come back to a constraint that has its source in the depths of human nature.

There is also evidence of an intellectual capacity of a more general kind which has made its influence felt in the processes of religious thought. The mind seems to experience a peculiar satisfaction when it discovers or takes over ideas that are in accord with momentous reality, and on the other hand it seems to be plagued by a certain uncomfortable restlessness when it is wedded to ideas that seriously misfit the

scheme of things. Truth, we say, will prevail, but the reason may well be, not merely that in the long run the force of good arguments is recognised and the weakness of bad ones is exposed, but that the mind has a certain intrinsic power of confirmation, and that it receives some kind of corroborative notice when truth has been discovered or appropriated. And this sense of reality or the corroborative sense, it would seem, is peculiarly active when the mind is in contact with God. It is characteristic of religious opinion that it is held with great tenacity, and that when associated with an intense experience the truth which has been apprehended has been welcomed by the mind with a cordiality that has seemed to render other proof superfluous. It was on the ground of this observation that Tertullian described the human soul as *naturaliter Christiana*, and the Reformers were content to rest the truth of the gospel on an inwardly wrought conviction which was felt to be so deep-rooted and inexpugnable that it was interpreted as a psychological miracle, and was given an important place in the theological system as the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*.

III

The powers and capacities which have been referred to are naturally found in all degrees and combinations. Man as man has usually exhibited the servile or mechanical type of faith, reinforced by the impulse of the religious instinct, while on occasion he has broken with it under the influence of what used to be called the vulgar Rationalism. In the primary religious periods the faith of the disciples has been closely bound up with personal experience, while in the second periods, when the convert has been in the

main the product of education and discipline, he has tended to base his faith on rational grounds. And the latent intellectual elements have manifested themselves in general correspondence with the depth and intensity of the spiritual life. The most important combinations are those which are met with among the highest members of the spiritual hierarchy, who have been denominated the saints. It was a necessity of the case, as was observed, that religious thinking involved the use of the understanding ; and it has to be added that most, if not all, of the great figures of religious history have had a clear title to intellectual greatness. There are, however, features of the intellectual life of the saints which have involved a certain disparagement of the understanding. For one thing, they have often declared that there were experiences, and objects implicated in their experience, for which the understanding provided no categories, and which must be classed as ineffable. Further, they have made little use of the reasoning powers in their own intellectual dealings with God and divine things ; for though they could be much in argument for the confutation of unbelievers and the confirmation of believers, they themselves seemed to apprehend the doctrines which made up the intellectual substance of their gospel in purely intuitive fashion. It is they, again, who have borne the clearest and most emphatic testimony to the existence and the influence of the latent intellectual elements of the religious mind. It is the saintly mind which has most strongly asserted the corroborative witness of the spirit to the truth, as in the declaration that 'though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach any gospel other than that which we preached, let him be anathema' (Gal. i. 8). And, finally, they have witnessed to modes of contact

with the divine in which the intellectual attitude was essentially passive and receptive, and they obtained knowledge which the intellect was able to appreciate but which it was beyond its power to have discovered.

These last extraordinary experiences have their familiar illustrations in the history of Israel and of the Apostolic Age, and Christian Theology has embodied and interpreted them in the doctrines of revelation and inspiration. In popular usage these terms are used indifferently or interchangeably for a divine act by which truths previously unknown have been communicated to a receptive mind. The distinction drawn in the old Protestant Theology was that revelation is the act by which God made divine truth to be known, inspiration the act by which He ensured that it would be accurately recorded. 'Revelation,' says Hodge, 'made a man wiser, inspiration secured him against error in teaching.'[1] The relation of the two terms has been better defined, following Rothe, by taking revelation in the general sense of self-disclosure of God, in which we may distinguish two parts—the manifestation of the divine in the events of history, and especially in the sacred history culminating in the life and work of Christ, and the inspiration which enabled prophetic man to interpret the meaning of the manifestations, and to place the substance on record for the benefit of future generations. Psychology has reinvestigated the extraordinary experiences of the kind which are associated with Christianity, collected parallels from other religions as well as from other departments of human life, and proposed to explain them by elements and laws of the human constitution. Professor Coe has analysed the phenomena into four

[1] *Systematic Theology*, 1878, i. 8.

classes :—(1) visions and voices ; (2) impressions that something is true ; (3) involuntary muscular reactions that give the impression of being controlled by a will other than one's own ; (4) inner revelations of a more general or vague kind.[1] Oesterreich has given a more detailed scheme which may be exhibited as follows in tabular form :

A.—Modes of Manifestation.

1. Presentation to the senses—
   (*a*) to the eye—Visions proper, which may be discerned by the outward eye (objective visions), or by the inward eye (imaginative visions).
   (*b*) to the ear—Auditions or voices, which similarly may be addressed to the outward or to the inward ear.
2. Presentation to the understanding—intellectual visions.

B.—Modes of Control.

1. Of the organs of speech—inspired speaking.
2. Of the hand—inspired writing.
3. Of the intellect—inspired thinking.

C.—The mystical union—the inward revelation to the soul.[2]

A.—1. The sensuous manifestations have been of two kinds, according to the degree of objectivity which they were felt to possess. Sometimes they have been seen and heard in precisely the same way as the sights and sounds which announce the existence of the objects and events of the external world. At other times they have been said to be seen by the inward eye or heard by the inward ear, while

[1] *Psychology of Religion*, 1921, pp. 193 ff.
[2] *Einführung in die Religionspsychologie*, 1917, pp. 21 ff.

yet a kind of reality was ascribed to them other than that which we ascribe to a stream of memory-images or the contents of a reverie. The scene in which a vision was laid could be near or far off, and the time to which it related could be the past, the present, or the future. Visions and voices fill a considerable space in the records of the experiences of the founders and apostles of the great religions. The Temptation of Buddha was depicted as an assault by Mara and his wicked angels, who, it was told, 'sought to overwhelm him with showers of rocks and darts, which, however, ere they reached him, turned into flowers.'[1] When Mohammed was wrestling in the wilderness with his doubts and fears, the angel Gabriel appeared to him in what he believed to be bodily form, and spoke to him with a voice that was as audible as the voice of a man. 'Mohammed erreth not,' he said, 'neither doth he speak of his own will. One mighty in power (the angel Gabriel) taught it him, and he appeared in the highest part of the horizon. Afterwards he approached the prophet, and drew near unto him, until he was at the distance of two bow-lengths from him; and he revealed unto his servant that which he revealed.'[2] The subjective vision may be represented by the night journey through the seven heavens, when he again had a vision of the angel. 'He also saw him another time by the lote-tree which there is on passing, near it is the garden of the eternal abode. When the lote-tree covered that which it covered, his eyesight turned not aside, and he beheld some of the greatest signs of his Lord.'[2] He distinguished between the outer and the inner voices. 'Sometimes Gabriel communicateth

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, 1903, p. 37.
[2] The Koran, I. iii.

the revelation to me, as one man to another, and this is easy. At other times it is like the ringing of a bell, penetrating my very heart and rending me, and this it is which grievously afflicteth me.' These last were 'the terrific Suras' which had 'hastened his white hairs.'[1] The call came to Moses in the vision of the burning bush, and in the account of the revelations of Sinai there is mention of the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words. The Old Testament prophets were known as seers, the men of visions; and their characteristic claim was that the voice of God sounded in their ears—inwardly no doubt, for the most part, but at times also as addressed to the outward ear. Isaiah did much observation, reflection and inference in his capacity of the statesman-prophet, but he records that his call and his message came to him with the vision of the Almighty sitting on His throne, high and lifted up in the midst of the Cherubim, and by a voice which spake to him out of the most excellent glory (vi. 1 ff.). The Gospels relate that Jesus at His baptism beheld a vision and heard voices, that this was repeated in the Temptation and on the Mount of Transfiguration, and that, as in the Temptation so in the growing darkness of the last days, He was comforted by a ministry of angels (Matt. iv. 11; Luke xxii. 43). The martyred Stephen had a vision of Christ as if rising from His throne to show him sympathy and hasten to his succour (Acts vii. 55). Paul, the representative of learning and dialectic among the apostles, owed his faith and the substance of his gospel to the vision which apprehended him on the way to Damascus.

2. The experience which Oesterreich construes as a manifestation to the intellect, and which he calls the intellectual vision, is rather to be regarded as a

[1] Tradition quoted by Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, 1858, ii. p. 88.

quasi-sensuous presentation akin to the manifestations to the eye and the ear. The essential content of the experiences by which he illustrates it is the sense of a divine presence, and the salient feature is that the divine object, though felt to be present, is not seen or heard. He illustrates it from the confessions of St. Theresa: 'I felt, for I saw nothing either with the eyes of the body or of the soul, but it seemed that Christ stood beside me, and I perceived that it was He who spake with me. I could not see His form, and yet I had the utmost assurance that all the time He was at my right hand, and the witness of all that I did or left undone. Asked how I knew it was Christ the Lord, I replied that I understood not "how," but I could not but observe that He stood by me.'[1] This experience may be connected with the sense of touch, which has a subjective form that is the counterpart of the perceptions of the inward eye and of the apprehensions of the inward ear. The name of the intellectual vision is better reserved for the presentations to the intellect which are made in connection with the experiences of illumination or inspired thinking.

B.—1. The forms of control which have been enumerated have been made the basis of theological doctrines, and it is agreed by Psychology that they are at least mental facts. There is a species of utterance which may be described in a general way as inspired, inasmuch as the speaker transcends the range of his wonted powers, or delivers a message which seems to have been given to him, and which he does not recognise as his own achievement. Inspired speaking has been a common phenomenon in the Christian Church and in other religious communities, in the form

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 47. For other examples see James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 1903, Lect. iii.

of the rapt utterance, and it has also occurred with some persistency in the special form of speaking with tongues. The commonest type of glossolalia is the ecstatic and incoherent outpouring of the tumultuous soul which St. Paul found in the Church at Corinth, and which he declared to be of little worth in comparison with knowledge, not to speak of charity (1 Cor. xiii.). But it is not so certain as is commonly assumed that the account in Acts of the speaking with tongues at Pentecost, in which it is made to appear that men spoke in foreign languages, is shown to be mistaken by St. Paul's report of the phenomenon in the Corinthian Church. There are examples from other fields of persons who made use in highly emotional moments of languages which they were unaware that they knew, and also of an apparent language which it was found impossible to identify.

2. Inspired writing has been asserted in two forms. Sometimes the account given of it is that a revelation had been received in the form of a vision, an audition, or an intellectual illumination, and that the recipient thereafter set down the communications as he was able. At other times the writer has felt that he was used as an amanuensis, or even that his hand was mechanically guided. Theology, in framing a doctrine of inspiration, has been disposed to dogmatise in terms of one or other of those experiences. Some of the Fathers held that the biblical writers were as a flute in the hands of the flute-player; and it was the doctrine of the old Protestant school that they had received by inspiration, not only the impulse to write and the suggestion of the matter, but the *ipsissima verba* of the narrative or the discourse. The modern theologian, on the other hand, conceives that 'the prophet, the psalmist and the apostle are degraded if they are

regarded as the mere mouthpieces or penmen of Deity, and that inspiration does not suspend the powers and faculties of the soul, but raises them to their highest activity.'[1] The objective verdict is that there is evidence in the Scriptures as in other religions that writing can be done with the impression either of mechanical or of dynamical control, but that in the Bible the claim of automatic writing is scarcely ever made.

3. Inspired thinking is the form in which the saintly and prophetic personalities have most constantly and characteristically been conscious of intellectual control by the powers of a higher world. The experience has commonly consisted in an extraordinary illumination in regard to the important truths of existence and of human life, accompanied by a feeling of inexpugnable certitude. The enlightenment of Buddha stood out as the decisive event of his spiritual history, though with his dogmatic presupposition he was debarred from explaining it as a real revelation. The blessed One sat at the foot of the Bodhi-tree, we are told, during seven days, enjoying the bliss of emancipation. 'Then at the end of these days in the first night-watch he gained a knowledge of all his previous existences, in the second of all present states of being, in the third of the chain of causes and effects, and at the dawn of day he knew all things.'[2] The central thing in the intellectual life of Mohammed was, not the occasional communings with the angel, but an apprehension of the world and of duty in the light of the Lord. With the Old Testament prophets the visions and the voices were exceptional, and could

[1] Strahan, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. 'Inspiration.'

[2] A somewhat different version is given in the Mahavagga, *S.B.E.*, xiii. 73 ff.

become a mere literary form: the constant and dominating characteristic was that they had experienced a mental illumination which gave them an understanding of the nature and the purposes of God, the requirements of His law, the principles of His government, His discipline of the nations, and the appointed goal which was to be reached through His mingled dispensations of judgment and mercy. Among the New Testament writers St. Paul is an impressive witness to the comprehensiveness, clearness, and certitude of the revelation vouchsafed to a prophetic intellect. He found himself in possession of a highly elaborate scheme of thought which embraced a doctrine of God and man, of the person and work of Christ, of the conditions of salvation, and of things to come; and his account of it was that neither did he receive it of man, nor was he taught it, but it came to him through revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. i. 12). Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, God had revealed to him through the Spirit (1 Cor. ii. 9). The mystics speak of an intellectual experience marked by an amazing widening of the horizon, and also by an amazing quickening of the power of apprehension. The founder of the Order of the Jesuits was a very different person from the founder of the sect of the Quakers, but the illumination of Ignatius Loyola closely resembled 'the openings of George Fox.' Loyola relates that one day, as he sat beside a stream, his eyes were opened, and though he saw no vision, he understood many spiritual things such as belong to the mysteries of faith and science. 'His spirit,' he says, 'enjoyed an extraordinary enlightenment, so that all the knowledge taken together which, by the help of God, he had gained

down to his sixty-second year, was not equal to that which was brought to him in these few moments. It was as if he had become another being and had received a totally different intellect.' [1] 'Now was I come up in spirit,' writes Fox, 'through the flaming sword, into the paradise of God. All things were new, and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. The creation was opened to me, and it was shown me how all things had their names given them according to their nature and virtue. The Lord showed me that such as were faithful to Him, in the power and light of Christ, should come up into that state in which Adam was before he fell, in which the admirable works of the creation, and the virtues thereof, may be known, through the openings of that divine Word of wisdom and power by which they were made. Great things did the Lord lead me unto, and wonderful depths were opened to me beyond what can by words be declared.' [2]

C.—The mystical experience, with which we shall be more directly concerned in another connection, may be regarded as the culmination of the series. In it there is a consciousness of something wider and deeper than the communication of knowledge to the mind—to wit, the self-impartation of God Himself to the soul. This experience of union with God may be said to be the highest form of revelation as combining the way of manifestation with the way of control. It represents the highest form of the manifestation of God to the soul, and at the same time the highest form of the control of the soul by God.

The extraordinary phenomena with which religious

[1] *The Confessions of Ignatius Loyola*, quoted by Oesterreich, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

[2] George Fox's *Journal*, [3], 1765, p. 17.

thinking has thus been bound up, especially in the periods of origins, reformations and revivals, has produced very varying impressions at different times and in different circles. The popular mind has looked on them as quite unique experiences, and has seen in them the hall-mark of the supernatural which invested the communications with heavenly authority. The report from the side of modern Psychology is that they have not been confined to the religious sphere, but are met with in many secular situations marked by emotional excitement ;[1] and since most of the parallel cases command no respect, being bound up with manifest hallucinations and illusions, the inference has been drawn that instead of lending any support to religious teaching they rather lay it open to suspicion and involve it in discredit. And certainly visions and voices, and the abnormal forms of control, are not of themselves evidences of divine influence and enlightenment. For patristic and mediæval Theology it was always an open question, that fell to be settled by higher tests, as to whether the abnormal phenomena were due to divine or to diabolic agency. Modern Theology has not dreamed of basing the truth of Christianity on the fact that the Old Testament prophets sometimes prophesied in an ecstasy, that at Pentecost men spake with tongues, and that St. Paul testified of being caught up into the third heaven, but has regarded these as incidents of a revelation, the reality of which fell to be tested on spiritual and rational grounds. At the most the visions, the auditions, and the kindred phenomena are evidence of the fact that in the deeper religious experiences the soul is stirred to its depths, and is so shaken

[1] Leuba, *The Psychological Origin and the Nature of Religion*, 1909, and other works. Coe, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

that it can act after the manner of the disordered or the sorely afflicted soul. And this is only what was to be expected if it may be supposed that a revelation could be given and received—that the finite spirit could come into immediate contact with the living God, and that divine truths should be suddenly flashed on the mind in their native majesty and splendour. The extraordinary experiences have a close affinity with the elements and tendencies which we have recognised as playing some part in ordinary religious thinking, and may be said to show on the whole a quickening and an intensification of these capacities. The manifestation given in the dim awareness that is involved in the religious instinct acquired a concrete definiteness in the sights and sounds of the sensuous presentations. The control exercised in the Godward impulse of the religious instinct, and also in the mind's sense of truth, was intensified into inspired speaking and writing, and reached its climax in inspired thinking. And finally the sense of the near presence of God, which is an element even of commonplace experience, was raised to its highest power in the mystical experience of union with God.

Of the extraordinary phenomena the most important in the present point of view is the revelation to the comprehending mind which may be called the intuitive vision. The prophetic personality might or might not have at his service the mechanism of visions and auditions, and there have been many degrees as well as many kinds of the experience of control: what was typical and constant was the apprehension of a clearly defined world of spiritual reality, with its threatenings that were gathered up into a message of judgment, and its promises that were condensed into a gospel. And the great question is whether the

prophetic way of intuition is a lawful way, and whether it is a way that has led to truth concerning the deep things of God and of the life of man.

The intuitive method of the prophetic mind is favoured by the consideration that it has been paralleled in other fields in which the greatest work has been done. Intuition has been described as an imagined short-cut to truth, and has been scornfully contrasted with 'the toilsome methods of scientific enquiry and the still more severe ways of philosophic reflection.'[1] But the antithesis does not hold on the highest planes of intellectual achievement. It has been said by many scientists that their generalisations and master-thoughts had flashed upon the mind after the manner of a revelation. It also seems evident that the great philosophers, in surveying the mass of cosmic and human facts that lay before them, had an intuition which gave them the fundamental principles of their system, and that the principles thus grasped were thereafter elaborated, illustrated, and justified by the operations of the reasoning intellect. Spinoza supposed that he proved the truth of his system by a closely-knit series of demonstrations, but the value of the system is seen to depend entirely upon the validity of the axioms and postulates which he had adopted at the outset as self-evident to his mind. This holds even more obviously of the values which form the subject matter of Ethics and Aesthetics. A philosopher may hold with Lotze that ethical values are supreme, and that the ethical principle should inspire and control all metaphysical constructions, but this proposition is one which is only guaranteed by the philosopher's insight into the structure and value of reality. And above all was it to be expected that

[1] Jones, *A Faith that Inquires*, 1922, p. 20.

those whose minds made the greatest venture, and took the vastest sweep that is possible to thought by thinking of God, and of the universe and men in relation to God, should have had the consciousness that they had not reasoned but seen, and that they had not discovered truth but had been apprehended by the truth.

It is an important observation that the religious thinking which has been done by the prophetic personalities has been found, after being tested in various ways, to be of extraordinary value. While the phenomena of visions and abnormal control have been associated in some other fields with indubitable hallucinations, and have issued in nothing with any respectable title to be regarded as truth or utility, the ideas for which religious inspiration has been impressively claimed have been greeted by mankind with extraordinary warmth, and have made the deepest mark on its intellectual history. What the millions of Asia are thinking about this world and the next, and about salvation and duty, was largely determined by what passed many centuries ago in the minds of Gautama and Mohammed. Similarly, the ideas that nourish the religious life and inspire the higher moral life of the millions of Europe and of the two Americas go back in the main to the teaching of the Old Testament prophets, and of Jesus Christ and His apostles. The school of the prophets was mysteriously recruited during several generations by a call which disregarded all outward advantages, and could be addressed to the herdsman as well as to the king and the priest; most of the apostles were fishermen; the greatest of the prophetic succession, with whom it also ended, was the Carpenter of Nazareth; and it is these who were accepted by the nations that have built up the

edifice of modern civilisation as their teachers and guides in regard to the nature, attributes and purposes of the Supreme Being, and the duty and the destiny of man. The only feasible explanation is that these ideas have been tested by the criteria which man has at his disposal for appraising the higher values which are submitted to his inspection, and that they triumphantly stood the test. And perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the situation is that the ratiocinative mind, with its profession of disinterested thinking, has gone so far in adding its imprimatur. Ideas which, as judged by certain accompaniments and the account given of them by their authors, were non-rational in their origin, were found to be capable of a rational justification, and were proclaimed by the representatives of philosophical thought to be worthy of reason at its highest stretch. The Alexandrian school of patristic Theology advocated the Christian doctrines as the divinely revealed system of philosophy, and defended this position against the champions of the wisdom of classical antiquity; and according to the general judgment of the ancient world it was successful in establishing the claim. The idea of God which was derived from Jewish and Christian sources was appropriated, if with some accretions from Platonism and Neoplatonism, by philosophical thinkers, who justified it by various forms of theistic proof; and it continued to be accepted in its essential elements as the foundation or crown of the metaphysical system until it was challenged in the modern period by the pantheistic doctrine, and also the principles of the empirical school. And the same remark applies in a measure to other fundamental Christian dogmas. Kant defended what he took to be the specifically Christian doctrines, while Hegel and Fichte found in the

dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation an anticipation of the most important of all known and knowable metaphysical truths. It was also found, when the world took up the Philosophy of History, that no ideas on the subject were marked by such depth and insight as those of the Old Testament prophets. In the recent period, no doubt, Christian Theology has been treated in some quarters with scant respect; but it remains an important and significant fact that, in the ages when the human mind was supposed to be capable of transactions with transcendental truth, and in the circles in which its competency is still believed in, the work done in religious thinking by the ratiocinative mind has consisted to no small extent in appropriating and elaborating ideas which had been transmitted to the world through prophetic channels, and in putting forward fresh arguments in defence of their rationality.

It is indeed somewhat disconcerting that in part the results of the intuitive thinking that has been done in the prophetic religions are inconsistent and irreconcilable. The warring theologies, said James, cancel one another, and this seems to discredit their alleged principle of knowledge. But there is another view which makes it possible to draw a different inference, and which I believe to be as sound as it can be honestly held. It is that the religions of the world differ, not in respect of being true or false, but in respect of their degrees of perfection. Every system of religious ideas which has apprehended a prophetic mind, and which has been welcomed as the truth by a nation or race, has been so apprehended and welcomed because it contained elements of truth and goodness which obtained some endorsement from reason and conscience, and which evoked the confirmatory witness to reality that arises

out of the hidden depths of the mind. Because of these elements of truth and goodness it was possible to find some satisfaction, and to feel some confidence, even in a very imperfect religion ; and it is observable that as the religions of the world have risen in dignity, when tested by the rational and ethical standard, they have been accompanied by a proportionate increase in the strength and the tenacity of the corroborative witness that is borne by the mind. It may be thought that this criterion is unfavourable to Christianity, as the modern Christian does not appear to be as strongly assured of the truth of his religion as the Hindoo or the Mohammedan. But while there is no religion from which it is so easy to fall away as Christianity, provided one is ignorant of it or has not lived by it, it is no less true that when it has been intelligently grasped and earnestly lived it has been accompanied by an assurance which is the very type of certitude.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE CHIEF END OF RELIGION

In the famous debate on the nature of religion which was started in the eighteenth century, it was maintained by Kant that religion serves the practical purpose of safeguarding the most important of human interests. Its function, he conceived, was to support and to round off the moral life. If man is to realise his moral ideal—as he ought to do, and is therefore able to do—he must believe in a future existence in which he will have the opportunity of going on to perfection; and if the future state is to satisfy his just expectations, it will be one in which matured goodness will be placed in an appropriate setting of perfected happiness. This result, however, cannot be produced by the blind and mechanical forces of nature, and so man has postulated the existence of God as the necessary condition for the attainment of his *summum bonum*.[1] The good man, in short, cannot but believe in a heaven, and he cannot expect a heaven, unless there be a God to build it. In principle Kant was right, but he interpreted the service of religion too narrowly. More has been expected of God within the sphere of the moral life than was thus recognised, and more has been expected of God in other departments of experience. The good man has usually asked for more at the hand of God than that He should see to it that virtue will be duly honoured and

[1] *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, v.

provided for in the end. He has felt the need of God, not only to render to goodness its due, but still more to help him to become good, and to persevere in goodness. Kant was deeply impressed with the depravity of human nature, and it might therefore have seemed to him to be necessary to apply to God for moral power, but he ignored or belittled this aspiration, because of his aversion to demands being made on God which appeared to be inconsistent with the autonomy of the human will, and also to undermine responsibility. Further, the hopes placed on religion have had a wider range than the confines of the moral life. When the question is taken to be, not why men should seek God, but what they have expected from the cultivation of relations with the Divine Being, it is seen that a formula is required which embraces goods of all kinds. Feuerbach proposed happiness as a comprehensive definition of the end which has been normally contemplated, and in this he was followed, with a caveat against his sceptical inferences, by Kaftan and other Lutheran theologians.[1] Pfleiderer distinguished two ends—one the satisfaction of a mystical disposition, the other the attainment of perfection of life in union with God.[2] That the intention of religion has been essentially practical has also been generally recognised from the anthropological side. 'Religion,' says Sir James Frazer, 'has consisted of two elements—belief in powers higher than man, and an attempt to propitiate or please them,' and he gives the primacy to the practical aspect in the eventual definition of the aim as 'the propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of

[1] Nitzsch, *Evangelische Dogmatik*, 1869, pp. 73 ff.
[2] *Grundriss*, [3], 1881, p. 13.

nature and of human life.'[1] In the philosophical schools religion is now usually regarded as being concerned with values. Some, following Höffding, have restricted its intention to the conservation of existing values. Others have maintained that this was part, but only part, of its programme. 'Heaven has been pictured in many different ways,' says Professor Sorley, 'but never as simply a museum of moral progress up to date.'[2]

The practical interpretation of religion, as it has been termed, gives prominence to the purpose which has been most conspicuously and constantly in evidence throughout the course of religious history. However much more religion has been thought to be and to accomplish, it has been generally believed that, in the apostle's phrase, godliness was profitable—that it had its aspect of utility equally with the works by which man is defended against the dangers that encompass his lot, is supplied with food, raiment and shelter, and is rejoiced by the satisfaction of his higher wants. Religion might further be defined as an optimism whose foundations are laid in pessimism. Every positive faith that has played an influential part in the history of the race has begun with a diagnosis of the natural condition of man, and has given out the provisional estimate that human life is full of grievous evils which are likely to become worse and worse. But each also went on to the assurance that, subject to the fulfilment of conditions, man might hope to be delivered from the evils, and to attain a condition of well-being with the characters of a salvation. Before Philosophy discoursed of values—a term which may be disliked for its foreign accent, or as smacking of the market-

[1] *The Golden Bough* (abridged), p. 20.

[2] *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, 1918, p. 179.

place—the religious vocabulary had more dignified equivalents with their aroma of piety: as blessings, benefits, mercies and good things. Religious thought has taken cognisance, as elements of a salvation, of all the higher kinds of values now generally recognised, and it has included within the range of its interests other kinds that are peculiar to itself. The table of values with which religion has been concerned might be constructed as follows:

1. Physical—health and length of days.
2. Social—wealth, power, honour, kindred and friends.
3. Emotional—blessedness.
4. Spiritual—(*a*) General—truth, beauty, goodness.
   (*b*) Religious—God and gifts of grace.[1]

The physical and social values have figured largely in religious thinking as material and temporal blessings. The emotional values include peace of mind, joyfulness and the affective aspects of hope and love. The intellectual values are truth and the possession thereof; the aesthetic are connected with the world of the beautiful and the sublime; the moral are represented by the good will and by the embodiment of goodness in character and life. If full account be taken of the content of spiritual experience a place must also be found in the table for values of the specifically religious kind. These last are of two forms—an objective relationship and a subjective state. The relationship is of the nature of sonship or friendship, and involves access to the presence of God and the enjoyment of His favour. The subjective condition is an assimilation to the life

[1] For a full and instructive analysis of the higher values, see Sorley, *op. cit.*, chap. ii.

of God which is known in ordinary experience as sanctification, and in saintly experience is intensified into a sense of vital union with God. The values have also been classified from the formal point of view as intrinsic and instrumental, permanent and transient, catholic and exclusive, higher and lower; and parallel distinctions have been worked out by theological thought.

While the common and persistent doctrine has been that religion is the means of escape from the worst of evils, and of the attainment of the best blessings, opinion has varied widely at different stages as to the nature of the boons that make up the highest good, and also as to the corresponding evils from which deliverance is to be sought. It is also observable that at one time it has been the community, at another the individual, that has been regarded as the chief recipient of the religious blessings. The synthesis of ideas in respect of the need and the content of salvation may be reduced to three main types, which have been closely, and no doubt organically, connected with the leading forms of the idea of God. The first type, which is associated with Polydaemonism and Polytheism, though it also continued to make its influence felt at later stages, may be termed the mundane theory of salvation. Its essential doctrine is that evil is calamity, and that salvation is prosperity. This conception has also usually been bound up with the view that the benefits of religion are primarily for the group, and only consequentially for the individual units. The second type of thought, which may be called the fugitive ideal, was chiefly developed in connection with Indian Pantheism. Its diagnosis of human life was that it is full of misery, and its great and precious promise was emancipation and rest. It

is, further, the individual to whom this gospel has been specially addressed. The third type, which was moulded under the influence of ethical Monotheism, and has its ideal exposition in the Biblical literature, has promised a plenary salvation. The distinctive feature of the theistic doctrine is that the worst of the evils of man's condition is sin, and that a true salvation must have as its core forgiveness and sanctification, while it also incorporates the lesser mercies that make for complete blessedness.

I

The mundane theory, as we have termed it, which estimates life and religion in terms of temporal well-being, is met with in its purity in Animism. The conditions among savage and semi-savage tribes are such as to make them feel that a salvation of the temporal sort is sorely needed. 'The legend of the happy heathen,' says Warneck, 'the contented and joyful children of nature, hardly needs to be contradicted to-day. The truth is that misery in every form—poverty, hunger, slavery and cruelty—is the inseparable companion of animistic heathendom.' And as if these ills were not enough, the imagination of the savage peoples his world with ghosts and demons that can make his life little better than an earthly hell. 'The Battaks,' says the same writer, 'are like lunatics living under the obsession of persecution. In house and village there lurk spirits of every kind, in the field they injure the crops, in the forest they frighten the woodcutter, in the bush they hunt the wanderer. From them come sicknesses, madness, cattle-plague, and famine. They hover about a woman in child-bearing, seeking for the young

child's life; of nights they swarm round the houses, and spy through the openings upon their helpless victims. Mightier spirits visit the villages, spreading epidemics. Even the dead friend or brother is transformed into an enemy, and his bier and grave become an object of terror.'[1] In a world of this kind, with whose actual evils, not to speak of the imaginary evils, man feels himself so little able to cope, it is not unnaturally thought that nothing is so urgently needed as a worldly protector and benefactor. 'The spirits whom the natives worship,' writes an African missionary, 'are not expected to give spiritual blessings, but only to help in temporal distress, to avert illness, to grant victory in war, and to ensure an abundant posterity. To keep possession of their goods and to avert calamity is the sole aim of their religiosity.'[2] Under Totemism the purpose of the religious rites has been conceived to be to reinvigorate a species of animals or plants on which the food supply depended, and at the same time to reinforce the vitality of the tribe by renewing and cementing its union with the sacred species.

The peoples of antiquity were subject to visitations of pestilence and famine, as well as to the standing ills that afflict human societies—in particular they were constantly exposed to the hazards and the desolations of war; and under Polytheism the worship of the gods was commonly organised as a department of the public service which reinforced the military arm, and also procured a blessing on the avocations and the arts of peace. In the Vedic hymns the blessings for which application is made to the divine protectors and patrons are chiefly cows, rain, sons, and victory over

[1] *Lebenskräfte des Evangeliums*, 1908, pp. 104-5.

[2] *Reports of the World Missionary Conference*, vol. iv., 'Animism.'

the dark-skinned aborigines, with frustration of the designs of the capricious and malignant spirits. Egyptian, Babylonian and Assyrian kings set the highest store on the value of the divine alliance which gave them the victory and enriched them with provinces and spoils. No people believed more firmly than the old Romans in the necessity of enlisting the aid of the gods in war; and even in the later rationalistic age there were those who saw in the might and the wealth of the Empire the reward of the piety of their forefathers, and who lamented that war was now carried on in sole reliance on valour and skill, and with neglect of the omens. The religion of the ancient Germans, according to Tacitus, had some elevated features; but they also believed that their gods shared their interest in their campaigns, and they anxiously observed the neighing of the sacred horses, with a view to getting assistance for the deliberations of the council of war. When with the advent of Christianity the question was raised as to which was the true religion, it was commonly thought that the criterion was the extent to which a deity could be depended on for succour and support in the evil day. Chlodwig, it is reported, put the Christian gospel to the proof by commending himself to Christ in the crisis of a battle, and when he got the victory he accepted baptism, and brought his Franks along with him into the fold of the Catholic Church. The Scandinavians clung long and obstinately to their Paganism; and even when the Norwegian kings became convinced that the good name as well as the higher interests of the realm required them to embrace Christianity, there were those of their subjects who said that Thor had served them well in the past in fighting and fishing, and that they saw no reason to

desert him for an untried patron. No doubt also they had another prejudice, as even in the Dark Ages it needed some ingenuity to combine piracy as a livelihood with a profession of faith in Christ.

When religion has been deemed to be primarily the concern of the group, it has still been common for the individual to make application for private benefits to the divine powers. In the animistic form of religion, the fetish and the charm may serve quite private uses. Polytheism was largely exploited in the interests of a self-regarding individualism. It was, indeed, one of the attractions of Polytheism that it had its gods and goddesses who presided over different departments of human life and labour; for the individual was thus encouraged to think himself assured of expert assistance in his perilous experiences and in his important undertakings. The popular religion of Greece and Rome consisted in large part in applications to appropriate divinities for good health, travelling mercies, and success in business. The gods specially revered by the Gauls, Caesar informs us, were those who presided over the three great departments of war, medicine, and commerce. At the polytheistic stage, also, the claims of the individual were recognised by a sanguine development of the idea of a future state. Belief in survival after death has prevailed in all periods, but in the later stages of Polytheism this notion was generally enriched by the hope of a blissful paradise. In general, also, the future salvation was conceived on the same lines as that which was coveted for the present life. Some thought of it as a land where man would resume the work of the hunter, the shepherd or the peasant; while the martial Aryans, from the Himalayas to the North Sea, loved to dwell on

the security that came after the storm and the danger, and on the feast and the song of the banqueting-hall that compensated for the privations of the earthly life.

The theory that the chief end of religion was to advance and safeguard worldly prosperity was open to serious criticism, and a variety of factors conspired to shake the belief and to dispose the mind to a higher conception of the content of salvation. The expectations of protection and of success in worldly undertakings were as often disappointed as they were fulfilled. Moreover, with the progress of civilisation it came to be thought by some that there were better things than worldly prosperity. And as it was axiomatic that, whatever might be the precise content of man's highest good, religion was the means by which it was to be won and kept, it was readily believed by the finer spirits that the things for which application was most fitly made to the Divine Being were those that make up the inward wealth of the soul. And yet again, if there be, as has been held, a Godward impulse in man, there must have been those in all ages who felt that the greatest of God's gifts was God Himself, and who were moved thereby to seek communion with God and likeness to God. There is evidence of some deeper aspirations in the Babylonian penitential psalms and in certain of the Vedic hymns. In particular, the Greek mysteries are evidence that there were those who were dissatisfied with the mundane undertakings of the popular Polytheism, and who looked for a salvation that consisted in a vital union with the divine.

II

The great pantheistic faiths, Brahmanism and Buddhism, presupposed that man is by nature in a

state of dire distress, and they promised a corresponding salvation. The practical aim was put in the forefront of the Buddhistic system, which was expounded under the same heads that have been used in setting forth the Christian gospel—viz., the disease, its cause, the remedy and the application of the remedy. The foundations of both systems were laid in a pessimistic estimate of the natural estate of man. For the Brahmanist the world was an illusion, and its prized possessions were worthless. In the first of the four noble truths Buddha gave his judgment that human life is nothing less than a welter of misery. 'Birth is sorrowful, growth, decay, illness, death—all are sorrowful; separation from what we love, hating what cannot be avoided, craving for what cannot be attained, are sorrowful.'[1] There was not even the consolation that if a man's days were evil they were at least few. For the doctrine of transmigration which dominated the thinking of the post-Vedic period made a human life to appear as a mere fragment of a prolonged existence, stretching before and after, which might be even more crowded at every stage with labour and sorrow, and in which, under the law of retribution, it was possible to descend to ever lower depths of misery and degradation.

For pious Indian thinkers the mundane eudaemonism of the polytheistic period was no gospel. It was agreed that salvation consists, not in the possession of earthly goods, but in the detachment of the soul from the things of sense and time. The principle that through religion man gains the victory over the world was given a new turn, and it was held to make him master of the world in the sense that he needed neither to covet its treasures nor to cower before its terrors. He has

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, 1903, p. 28.

realised the illusion and nothingness of all earthly things, and what then should he desire or fear? From of old the Brahman, after he had been enlightened, had no desire for children or possessions. 'What can he wish for who possesses all things?' Nor has he anything to fear, for he knows himself one with God, and 'fear arises from a second only.'[1] The Buddhistic attitude was the same—as illustrated in the life of the founder, who renounced all the goods of this world, and went forth into the wilderness, if so be that by meditation and fasting he might win a better inheritance. Contempt for the natural blessings of life was even carried with unflinching consistency to the point of despising the boon of life itself. While nature working through the instinct of self-preservation persuades the ordinary man, equally with the beast of the field, that life is to be defended as the most valuable of possessions, and while the normal inclination of piety is to thank God for being, even when it is divorced from well-being, the strange thing was seen in India that saints and sages, and even many of the multitude, came to think that not to be was better than to be, and that the true Saviour was he who could show the way of escape from the inextricable and intolerable maze of conscious existence.

In this weary and heavy-laden plight, with its still more oppressive outlook, it might well seem that the only adequate gospel was the promise of rest of soul. It was because the holy sages promised rest that Gautama renounced his title to worldly power and glory, and even the love of wife and child, and it was because he did not find it through the Brahmanical way of the mortification of the flesh that he came to proclaim what he deemed a more efficacious gospel.

[1] Brih. Upanishad, *S.B.E.*, xv. p. 85.

The Nirvana which he promised was not fully explained, but it was at least made clear that it is attainable here below, and that its essence is peace. In replying to a question touching the supreme good he ended with the declaration :

> The realisation of Nirvana,
> This is the greatest blessing.
> Beneath the stroke of life's changes
> The mind that shaketh not,
> Without grief or passion, and secure,
> This is the greatest blessing.[1]

The fundamental difference between the two systems might be said to be that Brahmanism promised rest through godliness, Buddhism through selflessness. The Brahmanist taught that the way to repose was through union with God. Knowing himself one with God, he felt that he rose superior to the sufferings and the conflicts of time, and could hope to fall into a dreamless and eternal sleep in the embrace of the Infinite. 'He whose heart is not agitated in the midst of calamities,' says the Bhagavad-Gita, 'who has no longing for pleasures and from whom the feelings of affection, fear and wrath have departed, he is called a sage of steady mind. His mind is steady who, being without attachments, feels no exultation and no aversion on encountering the various agreeable and disagreeable things of this world. A man's mind is steady when he withdraws his senses from all objects of sense as the tortoise withdraws its limbs from all sides. Objects of sense draw back from a person who is abstinent, not so the taste of these objects. But even the taste departs from him when he has seen the Supreme.'[2] Gautama, on the other hand, had no

[1] Quoted from the Mangala Sutta, Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, p. 127.
[2] *S.B.E.*, viii. p. 50.

appreciation of the religious values, either as elements of the supreme good or as a means of achieving peace. The Buddhistic system of thought recognised a moral order of the world, but there was no provision for communion with the divine until the disciple sought to supply the want by entering into relations with the deified Buddha himself. The main stress was laid on moral values, and it might even appear that religion was identified with morality, and so ceased to have the character of a salvation. 'To cease from all wrongdoing,' so runs a famous text, 'to get virtue, to cleanse one's own heart, this is the religion of the Buddhas.' The detailed list of the 'greatest blessings' includes right desires in the heart, almsgiving, righteousness of life, reverence, contentment, longsuffering, meekness, self-restraint and purity.[1] And there can be little doubt that there were those who deemed virtue to be the whole of religion, and its own reward. As there were Brahmanists to whom God was an end in Himself, and in no wise a means to finite ends, so there were doubtless Buddhists for whom the ethical values were themselves the highest good. But the system did not make of virtue its direct aim: rather may it be said to have taken the virtues under its wing because they fitted in with the more general aim of the extinction of desire—the argument being that as desire was the root of misery, so with the conquest and suppression of all desire misery would be replaced by peace of soul. On this principle thirst or craving was condemned irrespectively of the distinction between higher and lower desires and between the lawful and the unlawful; and while in some situations this worked out in the ethical forms of humility and service, it could also

[1] Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, pp. 126, 127.

work out in the sub-ethical and anti-ethical forms of an impoverished, solitary and useless existence ; for if in the name of selflessness the principle dictated the forgiveness of injuries, and the works of charity, it no less discountenanced the formation of domestic ties, and the desire to have the powers and the opportunities of service. And in solving the earthly problem of where rest may be found, it was believed that the problem of eternal deliverance was also solved. The attainment of repose through the extinction of desire was deemed to be the foretaste and pledge of a final deliverance, when ' the Maker of the tabernacle shall not make up the tabernacle again, but all the rafters shall be broken and the ridge pole sundered.' [1]

The extraordinary hold which Brahmanism and Buddhism took of the Asiatic peoples, and which has been maintained during so many centuries, is partly explained by the fact that the promise of rest makes a constant, and in special circumstances an irresistible appeal to the human being. That this gospel had for Asia a peculiar fascination may have been due to the temper of the masses of its population, and to conditions which in certain periods made existence as barren of hope as it was of comfort and security. It is significant that while the Indian Aryans in the period of their youthful energy had rejoiced in the Vedic promises of abounding life and prosperity, when they grew weary under the burden and heat of the oriental day they came under the spell of the gospel of repose. It is therefore easy to overrate the advance which was made when the theory that religion is the means of worldly prosperity was replaced by the theory that its office is to give peace of soul. For it might happen that, to adapt the phrase of Tacitus,

[1] Dhammapada, chap. xii.

they made a desert of the soul and called it peace. Repose may be the index of very different types of character, and the by-product of very different activities. It may be akin either to the peace of the saint and the sage, or to the placidity of the cow and the slumber of the tired horse. The pursuit of rest may be every whit as selfish as, and may entail even more injury to others than, the pursuit of wealth, and may have its roots in sheer indolence and cowardice. There is a higher moral ideal than that in which a man fears to possess wife and child, or to take part in the business of the world, lest thereby he should endanger his peace of mind. But in justice it has to be added that the higher ideal was pursued by many who pointed to the Buddha himself as their example, of whom it was told that when he had earned his release he returned once more to labour and suffer on earth because of love to man.

It may be further taken to be certain that religions which played the part that these have done in the spiritual history of the race must have had better credentials than that they fell in with the dispirited and despondent mood. Their power was rooted in elements of religious and ethical truth that were embodied in the gospels which they proclaimed. The Brahmanical principle which has been formulated as 'through godliness to peace' is a religious truth of the very highest importance; and it is quite credible from the theistic point of view that a man might attain to actual communion with God, and thus be made partaker in a measure of the peace which flows from God, even if his thoughts about God were steeped in ignorance and error. It is not a necessary condition of receiving good at the hand of a father or a mother that a child should know

much more than that they exist and are well-disposed; and the same doubtless holds, up to a certain point, of the relations of the Father of Spirits with those of His children who earnestly seek Him and put their trust in Him. Buddhism, in its turn, was based on a maxim which is one of the most important and assured truths of ethical experience—to wit, that the self-centred life is fruitful in misery, and that a man is on the way to find happiness when he does not make it his aim, but is only concerned to get the things done which are worth doing and which he finds it his duty to do. It was doubtless because this is a truth which can be verified and is constantly being verified in every life, rather than because it found human existence wholly evil, and held out the prospect of annihilation as the final blessing, that Buddhism attained to the dignity and made the conquests of a universal religion.

The great Indian religions were essentially individualistic and did not promise much to the nation as such. The indirect contribution from the character and the lives of the disciples may even have seemed of doubtful value, since the goods of this world which they dissuaded men from desiring—notably children and material possessions—were those which are vital to the well-being of the State. Buddhism in particular might well be thought to be a menace to the political community; and it was doubtless partly for that reason, partly because its essential irreligion was an offence to a deeply religious people, that it was driven into exile, and had to seek new worlds to conquer. Brahmanism, besides being better equipped as a religion, also did more to satisfy the demand that it should make a contribution to the well-being of the nation. This it sought to do by investing the castes, which included soldiers and

peasants, with a divine sanction, and by representing it as a duty, and indeed as a condition of salvation, that a man should labour faithfully and unselfishly in his appointed vocation. And it has to be added that the popular Epics did much to disseminate and commend the ideals of conjugal love, filial piety and friendship.

III

The monotheistic faith inspired and moulded what has been called the doctrine of a plenary salvation. Under Monotheism religion continued to be a combination of provisional pessimism and prepotent optimism. The difference was that the actual condition of man was depicted in even darker colours than before, and that the promise was made of a richer and more comprehensive salvation. For this type of doctrine the chief sources are the Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures. The common feature of the religion of Israel and of Christianity was the judgment that of all the ills of the human lot the chiefest is sin, which is indeed the root of all misery, and that obstinate and unrepented sin inevitably brings multiplying evils and avenging judgments in its train. The sense of sin, which is necessarily superficial in Polytheism, and which Pantheism tends to annul, is native to Monotheism, and it was intensified in an extraordinary degree in the religious thinking of which our Scriptures are the record and deposit. Sin being thus deemed to be the greatest evil, deliverance from sin was conceived as the chief part of salvation. At the same time there is a decided difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament in the conception of the content and the destination of the blessings. The thinking of the

Old Testament prophets was chiefly done in terms of the nation, and the salvation which they promised was essentially national well-being. The gospel of the New Testament was primarily addressed to the individual and was preponderantly spiritual.

1. The provisional pessimism of religious thinking was strikingly exemplified in the message of the Old Testament prophets. The people of Israel were no worse than their neighbours—in some respects they were better—but to the prophets, whose standard was the will of the all-Holy God, it seemed that never was wickedness like unto their wickedness. They mourned over the many sins of the people—idolatry and backsliding, covetousness, sins of the flesh and sins against love. Isaiah declared that 'the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and festering sores' (i. 5, 6). And this being their case, there was a fearful looking-for of doom. 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth,' said Amos, 'therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities' (iii. 2). But beyond and above the vision of judgment there rose the vision of salvation, which was declared to be guaranteed by the loving-kindness and the faithfulness of God.

The prophetic conception of salvation was set forth in the pictures of the Messianic Age, which were chiefly conceived in terms of national life. The highest ideal of kingship would be realised. 'The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain' (Isa. xi. 2 ff.). At a later stage, with the deeper insight that was gained through affliction, the deliverer was pictured as the suffering servant who purchased redemption for the people through a sacrificial death (Isa. liii.). There would be an ideal aristocracy: every nobleman would be a noble man—an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest (Isa. xxxii. 2). And there would be an ideal Israel—'the people will be all righteous' (lx. 21). 'I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people' (Jer. xxxi. 33). And again, 'I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances and do them' (Ezek. xi. 19). Yet another ideal element was the ascription to Israel of the rôle of the missionary to heathen nations. It was predicted that it would be the glory of Israel to spread abroad true religion, and that thus in Abraham and his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen. xii. 3). But while these high things were the essence of the promised salvation, they had their setting of mundane prosperity. 'All these blessings shall come on thee,' said the prophetic lawgiver, 'if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the young of thy flock. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy kneading-trough. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in and when thou goest out.

The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thee: they shall come out against thee one way, and shall flee before thee seven ways' (Deut. xxviii. 2 ff.).

Patriotism and politics, however, even when idealised, do not completely satisfy spiritual aspirations, and in the later period the spokesmen of the Old Testament religion increasingly recognised the title of the individual to a provision suited to his individual wants. In this matter an important contribution was made in the Psalter. The 23rd Psalm represents God as the Shepherd who feeds and leads His sheep, and protects them even in the valley of the shadow of death; the 121st gives the assurance that the Lord shall keep the soul of His servant, and preserve him from all ill; the 103rd gives a comprehensive list of the religious blessings —the forgiveness of iniquities, the healing of diseases, the preservation of life, the crowning with loving-kindness and tender mercy, the renewal of strength. It may be that, in the original intention of the sweet singers of Israel, the sacred lyrics voiced the needs and the hopes of the nation; but at least the individual, and this doubtless from the earliest times, has found that he could appropriate their admonitions and consolations to his private uses. When in the later period the prophets and sages reflected more on the needs of the individual, it was natural to suppose that he was placed under the same dispensation of retributive justice which was recognised in the case of the nations—that, as is said in the first Psalm, the righteous man flourishes like a tree planted by the rivers of water, while the wicked is like the chaff that the wind driveth away. The facts of experience, however, made it impossible to sustain this thesis, and at the later stage immortality was included with growing

confidence among the religious blessings. When the collective point of view was predominant it had been possible to neglect the question of the future life—the more so that the subject was in the hands of witches and wizards, whose traffic with spirits was felt to be a social danger; but immortality was the natural corollary of the Old Testament doctrine of God, and it was inevitable that a claim should come to be made on the all-sufficient God for protection against the evil which appears to be the climax and the sum of earthly calamities. It could not continue to be thought credible that the God who took order that the sun should not smite His servant by day nor the moon by night, and who made goodness and mercy to follow him all the days of his life, should leave him to perish under the assault of the last enemy. And so it was proclaimed with growing assurance that he would dwell in God's house for ever, and that at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore (Psalm xvi. 11).

The teaching of Mohammed had an affinity with that of the Old Testament prophets. The doctrines of Islam, it may be said, were due to a prophetic mind which partly re-discovered, partly appropriated from the Old Testament, the fundamental tenets of ethical Monotheism, but which made compromises, as the prophets did not, with the programme of unregenerate human nature and the requirements of worldly policy. For Mohammed, as for his predecessors, God was the God of nations, who gave to His faithful people the victory over their enemies, and who could be depended on to endow the State with power and prosperity. 'Those who take other patrons besides God,' he said, 'are like the spider which maketh to herself a house, but the weakest of all houses is the house of the

spider.'[1] His conception of the content of national salvation compares unfavourably with that of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; but, on the other hand, he offered some compensation by giving extraordinary prominence to the doctrine of individual immortality. His description of the proceedings of the Day of Judgment is very impressive. On the other hand, his vision of Hell is on the plane of the materialistic medieval conceptions, and his Heaven has features that the crudest Christian piety has declined to entertain.

2. In the New Testament scheme of salvation, as has been said, the gospel was primarily addressed to the individual. As formerly the nation, so now the individual, was weighed in the balance; and as before, the verdict was a judgment of condemnation and doom. The pessimistic judgment was indeed qualified in the teaching of Jesus. He distinguished between good men and bad, He found much that was good even in the worst of men, even as He found many bright and beautiful things in the world and in the human lot that were a revelation of the loving-kindness of the heavenly Father. To see in the world nothing but a vale of woe and a race of criminals is not in the spirit of the Galilean gospel. But it is still true that Jesus drew a very sombre picture of the condition and the outlook of man; for He taught that men as such are evil, that sin and misery are inseparable even in this world, and that there remains in the world to come the sentence on the impenitent sinner —'Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels' (Matt. xxv. 41). The foundations of the Pauline Theology were laid in the doctrines that the natural state of man is a condition of heinous guilt and deep-seated misery, and that the

[1] Koran, chap. xxix.

situation is made desperate by the certainty of righteous judgment and of merited punishments. In his indictment of human nature the apostle affirmed the total depravity and the spiritual inability of man, and his view of the consequences of sin was that which has been compendiously stated in the Shorter Catechism—that man by the Fall lost communion with God, is under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of Hell for ever. In the Johannine writings the judgment was no whit less stern, and the outlook no less dark. 'The whole world,' it is written, 'lieth in the evil one' (1 John v. 19). 'Men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil' (John iii. 19). And this state of sin is even now a state of death (1 John iii. 14), with the fearful looking-for of the second death (Rev. ii. 11).

The consentient testimony thus being that man is sorely, nay desperately, in need of a salvation, the New Testament evangel could only be a splendid gospel if it was to be a gospel at all. As a fact, every type of New Testament doctrine puts in the forefront the announcement of a mighty deliverance. Each version has its central and regulative idea, and in each case what is set in the forefront is some aspect of a great salvation. The Synoptic record of the teaching of Jesus proclaims the good news of the advent of the Kingdom of God; the primitive apostolic writers rejoice in the fulfilment of the age-long hopes of Israel and of mankind; St. Paul expounds the gospel of reconciliation and sanctification; the Epistle to the Hebrews glories in the new way of access to God that has been opened up through the perfect priesthood and the perfect sacrifice; and the Johannine writings magnify the salvation whose temporal and eternal blessings are

summed up in the boon of eternal life. The content of this salvation is conceived of as essentially spiritual, and there are three benefits which, though they are described in different ways, are proclaimed with unanimity. These benefits are the filial relationship with God, resting on reconciliation and entailing the forgiveness of sins, participation in the life of God or sanctification, and the complementary and completing gift of everlasting life. The Synoptic record includes them among the privileges and the expectations of the members of the Kingdom—who might perhaps rather be called the children of the holy family of which God is the Father and the Head. They have communion with the Father, and receive the forgiveness of their sins; there is a righteousness of the Kingdom which is a gracious gift as well as an arduous task, and it is involved in their sonship that they are heirs, and that it is the Father's good pleasure to give them the Kingdom (Luke xii. 32). In the Pauline system the main stress is laid on restoration to the favour of God who 'was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses' (2 Cor. v. 19). This blessing as appropriated to the individual was described as justification on the ground of the mediation of Christ; and subject to the condition of the boon being claimed by faith, the sinner was accepted by God as righteous, freed from the penalties of sin, and admitted to the full privileges of the sons of God. 'All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus' (Rom. iii. 23-24). It may, however, be a question whether Paul, though he put justification in the forefront, did not rather look on this as a means to an end —the end being the development in the soul of a divine

life which, beginning in the birth of the new creature, and putting forth the fruits of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance (Gal. v. 22), could grow to the measure in which the soul was filled with all the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 19). And Heaven was indispensable to the plenary salvation. 'If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable' (1 Cor. xv. 19). His conception of Heaven was that it was the consummation of communion and sanctification, with their accompaniments of peace and joy, of which the believer has a foretaste and an earnest in his earthly experience, while there was an additional inheritance, in which he included truth, of things which eye saw not, nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man (1 Cor. ii. 9). The same ideas concerning the content of salvation are set forth in another form in the Johannine type of doctrine. Special stress is laid on the religious relationship, which, presupposing Christ to be the propitiation for sins, takes the intimate form of an inhabitation by the Father, a mystical union with Christ, and the presence of the Paraclete. The fourth Gospel lays special emphasis on the necessity of the sinner entering the sphere of the divine life through a second birth (iii. 3 ff.), while the last discourses of Christ unfold the doctrine of the Spirit as the principle of a progressive sanctification and illumination. The blessing of eternal life was primarily the spiritual condition which consists in union with God and participation in the life of God, but the Johannine idea certainly included everlasting duration as well as divine quality of life (xiv. 2, 3).

While the content of the Christian salvation was thus set forth as preponderantly spiritual, it had also a material and temporal side. It was a vital element

of the teaching of Jesus that the happenings of the earthly lot are under the care of a God of Providence to whom a petition is to be made for the daily bread, and who has made known to His children the law that if they seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all other things, including the needed provision of food and raiment, will be added unto them (Matt. vi. 33). Paul had as firm a faith in the gospel of Providence as in the gospel of Grace, and he adduced proofs from his own life that the pardoned sinner was under a providential dispensation which controlled and guided the circumstances of his earthly lot—not indeed with a view to protect him against all calamities, but to the end that he might not be tried beyond what he was able to bear, that he might continue to grow in grace, and that there might be opened to him new doors of opportunity in the service of God and of His Church. The Apocalyptic School looked for power and glory from the divine government of the world, and cherished the hope of a millennium (Rev. xx. 4).

3. The Christian Church in its main body, and in its chief branches, has held fast to its faith in a gospel which, presupposing that man is by nature under the dominion of sin and that the wages of sin is death, points the way to forgiveness, sanctification, and eternal salvation. In the controversy between Romanism and Protestantism these blessings were taken for granted, and the matter chiefly in dispute was as to the degree in which, and the stages by which, the blessings are to be appropriated. In the later history of Protestantism there have been schools, notably the eighteenth-century Rationalism, which resolved the benefits of Christianity into the salutary effects produced by teaching the doctrine of God and immortality, and by inculcating the principles of the Christian

ethic; but every considerable branch of the Church has adhered, even in decadent ages, to the testimony which was received from the fathers—that sinful man is in a state of dire distress, and that his needs are gloriously met in the gospel. For the masses it has always been axiomatic that Christianity is a salvation, and a religion which makes no considerable pretensions so to be has been looked on as salt that had lost its savour. At the same time it is doubtful if the multitude has ever greatly appreciated the more spiritual elements of Christianity. In the older period the blessings chiefly consisted for the popular mind in escaping Hell, passing easily through Purgatory, and winning Heaven, and also in providential dispensations which could be relied on for the protection and prosperity of towns, families and individuals; and it is because its faith in both articles has been shaken, while it has not become more fitted to appreciate spiritual promises, that there has been an epidemic of religious indifference in the latter days.

The Christian salvation has also made some provision for the collective subjects. There is indeed a serious ambiguity as to the authentic attitude of Christianity to the national community as such, to the goods of civilisation of which it is the bearer and the guardian, and to the course and the goal of the history of the race. The New Testament was largely influenced by the Apocalyptic view, according to which the kingdoms of this world were provinces of the Kingdom of Darkness, and God was speedily to intervene in judgment, to destroy the existing political and social organisation, and to establish His Kingdom above the clouds or on a re-created earth. That no considerable future on existing lines was expected for the nations might also be inferred from the fact that,

in contrast with the Old Testament prophets, the New Testament left it open to hold opposed opinions on questions of vital importance to the State, so that Christians have debated whether monarchy or democracy is of God, whether war is ever lawful, whether marriage is ever dissoluble, and whether a socialistic system would come under the category of robbery or of brotherhood. On the other hand, a positive attitude toward collective life is implied in Christ's parable of the leaven which presupposes the continuance of the general life of the world, and its gradual permeation by the religious and moral principles of the Kingdom of God. Paul rated highly the services rendered to the world by the Roman Empire, and predicted that it would be maintained as a minister for good at least until the forces of evil had been matured and consolidated for the final conflict (2 Thess. ii. 5 ff.). In truth, the ignorance which Paul confessed when he said that he saw through a glass darkly was illustrated by the original Christian outlook on the course and goal of human history. It has since become clear that the world has been the nursery of ideal values of many kinds which may not be disparaged in the name of the religious values, and that the story is not to be summarily ended as a hopeless experiment and an ignominious failure in a cataclysm of doom. Rather does it seem to be moving towards an issue worthy of the human genius, and of the divine power which set man his tasks and equipped him for their accomplishment. But while the Christian gospel contained no promise of national salvation, it is also true that when it became clear that the world was to last for some time longer, and even to traverse new epochs, it appeared that there were very important Christian contributions to be made

towards the enrichment of the life of nations. It is no inconsiderable service that the Christian gospel has moulded individuals who have greatly augmented the moral and intellectual resources of the civil society. Further, while Christianity did not undertake to outline the institutions and arrangements of an ideal commonwealth—which would have been incompatible with the vocation of a universal religion, it had nevertheless principles which were found to be most relevant to the tasks of the State, and to the relations of the peoples with one another. In the Middle Ages considerable success was achieved in imposing upon semi-barbarous peoples a type of civilisation that bore a Christian impress. The Reformed branch of the Protestant Church, as represented by Calvin and Knox, was distinguished by its strong conviction that Christ was the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords; and it earnestly preached to the civil magistrate that he was a vicegerent of God whose duty it was to take order that His will should be done by an earthly legislature and executive even as it is done in Heaven. Since the eighteenth century the political action of the Western peoples has been more and more governed by professedly secular ideals; but in recent times, and not least because of the chaos into which Europe has been plunged by the political wisdom or unwisdom of the world, there has been a deepening belief that, if mankind is even to safeguard the cultural and moral gains of the past, it can only be by the governments making the attempt to put into practice the principles of love, brotherhood and service which are enshrined in the programme of the Kingdom of God.

The collective subject which is most prominent in the New Testament as the recipient of the blessings of salvation is the Christian Church. The Kingdom

of God as proclaimed by Jesus was in one point of view a society, and as such it received great promises. In the Pauline system a very prominent place was given to the Church, which, as the true Israel, was conceived to be the heir, in a spiritualised and more glorious form, of the promises that were made of old to the Jewish nation. The medieval estimate of the benefits of revelation could be summed up as the boon of the divine Institution, which was conceived as a continuation of the Incarnation, as sharing in the prophetic, the priestly, and the kingly of Christ, and as destined, even as it had shared in the fellowship of His suffering, to be a partaker in His glory. It was a possibility that the European situation might have so developed that the peoples would have been organised in a theocratic federation presided over by the Pope, for which the Church would have prescribed its political and social ideals, and regulated its international relations, while it would have had at its disposal the temporal power that was needed to enforce its authority; and it is probable that, if this had been the line of development, there would have been large compensation for the repression of national aspirations and the abridgment of national liberties in the securities that would have been provided for some moralisation of politics and for the limitation and even the cessation of war. It was, however, decreed otherwise—doubtless for the greater good of the Continent; and the Church has had to content itself with the privileges which it possesses as in a peculiar sense the temple of the Holy Spirit, as the special custodian of the means of grace, and as the principal instrument for the advancement of the Kingdom of God on earth.

IV

It has, then, been the most prominent and persistent conception of the function of religion that under the care of, or in alliance with, the Divine Being, man enjoys protection against the worst of the evils by which he is afflicted and menaced, and advances to the possession of the best blessings to which he can aspire. This end has been proclaimed in the authoritative exposition of the great faiths of the world, it has been earnestly defended by the main body of the disciples and by the religious communities, and it has had the endorsement of general human opinion. There has been wide divergence of opinion, as we have seen, as to the content of man's highest good, but it has been at least generally agreed that it is to be won and kept through the instrumentality of religion. And in claiming to be the means to this high end, religion has the field to itself. It may or may not be held that its claim is justified, but at least it has no rival in its bold undertaking. The activities of the secular order only profess to provide particular and limited goods of which man has only a temporary tenure: there remain evils with which man can cope only partially or not at all—notably sin, sorrow and death, and there are priceless blessings which human service can only bestow in part and cannot guarantee. Such a claim, naturally, has evoked much criticism both in ancient and in modern times, and I conclude with some observations on the chief of these strictures.

The objection taken in the name of religion itself is that the doctrine of salvation reduces God to an instrument for the attainment of personal and private advantages. The aspirations of this type of religiosity, says Fichte, really come to this—'My

will be done, mine only, and that through all eternity, which for that reason will be a blessed eternity ; and in consideration thereof let Thy will be done in this brief and painful present.' ' A God who is to be the servant of our desires,' he adds, ' is invoked to render service which any respectable man would despise. Such a God is an evil God, for if He existed He would be working evil to man instead of good. Those who believe in the wish-fulfilling God are the true Atheists who have made to themselves a pernicious idol. The self-seeking religion is superstition, profanation, irreligion.'[1] The writer of the prologue to the Book of Job may be thought to have been of the same opinion, as his view is that the man who serves God because it is profitable does not really reverence the Lord. And undoubtedly when it is the whole of a man's religion that he demands that God shall be his protector in time and eternity it is difficult to defend it against the charge of being a form of the self-worship which is idolatry. But there is an obvious distinction between the conviction that we must look to God for protection and deliverance in the distress of our natural estate, and the view that God merely exists to be the servant of our desires, and that His claims upon us are to be measured by our interests. The latter position can be emphatically repudiated by those who humbly and gratefully occupy the former. It cannot be made an objection to religion that in it a man seeks salvation at the hand of God, unless it also be made an objection to friendship or family life that they are the springs of a happiness and a well-being which cannot be procured through other channels.

From the ethical point of view it has been objected

[1] *Anweisung zum seligen Leben.*

that the desire for salvation is a form of the self-seeking which is the antithesis of true morality. The good man, it is said, obeys the law because such is his duty, and morality is tainted and degenerates into policy when we are influenced by considerations of personal advantage or by the hope of a reward. It is one of the commonplaces of the Dhammapada and of the Bhagavad-Gita that piety is spoiled when there is any expectation of rewards here or hereafter from the performance of good works; and since the eighteenth century it has been common in the West to depreciate Christian morality as deriving its dynamic from the fear of eternal punishment and the hope of eternal bliss. And it must be admitted that the quest of salvation has often been on precisely the same level of ethical dignity as the measures taken by men in the mundane sphere to protect and advance their interests. In heathenism, as we have seen, religion was in general viewed in this way; and in former times Christianity was very generally regarded as merely the means by which a prudent man effected the insurance of his position, and rounded off a successful life in this world by making a safe provision for the next. But we have seen that, in the higher faiths, and notably in Christianity, the idea of salvation culminated in the conception that the highest blessings are communion with God and the regeneration which has as its marks the renewed will and the loving heart, and that the promised Heaven is the state of perfected bliss because it is first the condition of perfected holiness. And if it be self-seeking to apply to God for help in becoming like to Himself and doing His will, this is a form of self-seeking which is indistinguishable from the loftiest moral aspiration.

It has also been said that the utilitarian aim gravely

prejudices the claim of religion to be true. This is the contention which was supported by the famous treatise of Feuerbach on "The Nature of Christianity." He recognised the essentially practical aim of religion as directed to secure 'the well-being, the salvation, the blessedness of man'; and from this he drew the inference that man had devised a God or gods, made in his own image, to satisfy his desires.[1] The wish, in short, was father to the thought, and the parentage stamped the thoughts an illusion. But it does not at all follow that because the things which man has looked to receive from God are the things which he most highly values, he has therefore no reason to expect them. The fact that religion undertakes to satisfy human wants and to gratify human wishes is a reason why its claims should be very carefully scrutinised, but it still remains a possibility that man is a being of such dignity as to be entitled to the satisfaction of his deepest wants and the fulfilment of his highest wishes, and also to the consolation of believing that, when satisfaction is denied him, it may only be postponed. For the modern mind religion is at once too pessimistic and too optimistic—too pessimistic in its diagnosis and too optimistic in its prognosis; but it often appears that time, and we may hold that eternity, is on the side of optimism. Human history, notwithstanding its manifold failures and disappointments, has shown a large fulfilment of aspirations which once might well seem to be ruled out by the untoward conditions of the terrestrial environment, as well as by the defects of human nature; and there is ground for the faith that a being of the spiritual rank of man will sometime and somewhere attain to his *summum bonum* —that the power in the universe which has helped to

[1] *Das Wesen des Christenthums*, 1903, p. 222.

realisation so many elements in the human programme of civilisation and culture has not been deaf to the cry for the satisfaction of the craving for communion with Himself, for power to live up to the moral ideal, and for the immortality which is the condition of moral and spiritual perfection.

Finally, there is the objection that the rich promises of religion have been discredited by the facts of experience. Throughout the ages faith has sung in every language under Heaven :

> He will not put my soul to shame,
> Nor let my hope be lost.

And yet this, it may be said, is just what has been the everyday occurrence under every religious system. The Old Testament prophets make known to us scoffers who, while they magnified the God of salvation, contended that God did nothing : ' Let him make speed,' they said, ' and let him hasten his work, that we may see it, and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it ' (Isa. v. 19). Aristophanes in the *Birds* leaves the impression that the Olympian gods are of no use to mankind, while their service entails very heavy charges in the matter of offerings, and that it would be wiser to transfer allegiance to the fowls of the air which have manifest powers both to do good and to do evil. Euripides thought that the gods were great in promises, but chiefly in promises. ' And Apollo,' said Menelaus, ' doth he not ward off thy calamities ? ' ' He is going to do it,' replied Orestes, ' as is the way of the gods.' [1] The futility of religion was a favourite theme of Lucretius, who shows us the vessel caught in the tempest and the whirlpool, gives us to hear the

[1] *Orestes*, 419, 20.

frantic cries and vows of the crew and passengers, and pictures with a grim satisfaction how, beneath a deaf and pitiless Heaven, they pass to their inevitable doom. In our modern world there are numerous persons who think religion is proved futile because much that it once undertook to accomplish is now done by applied science and done more effectively, while a vastly larger, if more silent, company of men and women have lost their faith in God because of the unanswered prayer that a daughter should be healed of her sickness, or that the head of a son should be covered in the day of battle. As a fact, when we survey the conditions of human life upon this planet, the most natural reading of the situation may appear to be that man has been placed under a system of inexorable laws, and that he has been left to find out what he can about his world, and to adjust himself to it as best he may, without hope of external guidance or help. He seems to have been dealt with as a son by a father who sends him out into the world to depend on his own efforts, and who is told to expect no further help from home. But there are weighty considerations to be taken into account on the other side. In the first place, it is to be observed that the criticism has been mainly made by or levelled against those who have not risen above the idea that religion is the vehicle of material and temporal benefits. When this ancient and natural point of view is transcended, and the idea is grasped that the salvation of Christianity is a spiritual salvation consisting in union with God and participation in the life of God, it is matter of common experience that the silences, the refusals, and even the worst strokes of Heaven can take on a quite different aspect, and that what was deemed to be a curse is found in the issue to have been transmuted into a blessing. In

the second place, when a judgment is pronounced as to the futility of religion in one's life, the probability is that it is the proverbially foolish judgment on a half-finished work—a judgment which we shall see many reasons for recalling when at life's close we look back on all the way by which we have been led, and which, if man be the heir of eternity, will doubtless seem doubly foolish when viewed from the vantage-ground of a future state of existence. The decisive question is whether religion accomplishes what it undertakes at its highest in the bestowal of the spiritual salvation. And in regard to this it must be said that, while there are promises of religion that remain and must remain in the realm of hope, it is matter of experience and of observation that in unnumbered instances it has done what it undertook in the deliverance of a soul from the sense of alienation from God and from the thraldom of sin; and that it has also given such a victory over suffering and sorrow that thanks could be given even for the cross, and that all things—the evil as well as the good—could be declared to work together for good because men had found God and had loved God. And it has to be added that there is a widespread, deep-seated conviction—which is supported by much experience—to the effect that notwithstanding the reign of law there is still a God of Providence who is able to act in and through natural causes as the controller and disposer of all events, and whose guiding purpose is the highest good of the soul that puts its trust in Him.

# CHAPTER VII

## RELIGION AS DUTY TO GOD

THE chief end of religion, as we have seen, has been to enable man, through union with a divine power, to obtain deliverance from the actual and the threatened evils of his lot, and to gain a title to the secure possession of the highest blessings. Every faith that has struck its roots deep in the soul of nations has had the character of a gospel for the sorrow-laden or the sin-laden children of men. But if this practical purpose has been chiefly in evidence it certainly has not been the sole purpose. It would, in fact, be a striking anomaly if it should appear that man, in seeking communion with God, has been exclusively determined by a regard to his own interests and well-being, and has not been influenced to some extent by an unmixed sense of duty. Human nature is a complex thing, and in other relationships of life we reckon on the combination of the self-regarding motive with an altruistic spring of action. The constant dynamic of the economic sphere is self-interest —men in general make their plans and perform their work with an eye to profit and power; but it has also been found possible to exercise a craft in the spirit of an artist, and to appreciate a business as a vocation, as on the other hand it has been found possible to carry the spirit of trade into the exercise of a liberal profession. Friendship is a source of happiness, friends are a support and a stay, and there

have been those whose maxim has been that of the old Chinese philosopher—'associate with those who can advantage you, put away from you those who cannot do so.' It has, however, been the general view that to see in a friendship merely a form of self-seeking is to libel our human kind, and that it has its real basis in affection, and possesses a code of pure obligations. In the life of the family, duty accounts for much more than self-interest, and that on the side of the children as well as the parents. Jacob schemed for the birthright, and Esau said, 'Bless me, even me also, O my father,' but at least Esau gets credit for an accompaniment of filial affection and loyalty. It would therefore be passing strange if man, who is quite accustomed to forget the claims of self in his relations with his fellow-creatures, should have been unable to think of aught but his interests when he was ushered into the presence of the Highest. Nor may this be laid to his charge. It has, it is true, been commonly believed that a salvation is needed, and also that the only hope of a true salvation is in God; but it is an additional truth that God has been felt to make imperious claims upon His creatures, and has evoked a constant response from man's native capacity of reverence and his sense of obligation.

It has been generally recognised that religious duty is a form of obligation, and duty to God has sometimes been fastened on as the most characteristic feature of the religious life. This seems to have been the aspect which impressed the observer who coined the term religion, and also the community which proceeded to give the word a place in its vocabulary. Three different etymologies have been proposed, and it is a curious coincidence that each yields an idea that belongs to the sphere of conscience and duty. Cicero

derived the term from *relegere*, and thought that those had been called religious who 'handled again and, as it were, conned over (or gathered up) all things which related to the worship of the gods.'[1] The essential feature would thus be scrupulosity or conscientiousness. Lactantius connected it with *religare*, and thus made it a variant of obligation. 'The name of religion,' he says, 'is derived from the bond of piety, because God has tied man to Himself, and bound him by piety; for we must serve Him as a master and be obedient to Him as a father.'[2] Some modern scholars have preferred to connect the word with the Sanskrit root which is related to our term look (Ger. *lugen*),[3] in which case it would mirror the spell-bound glance and the spell-bound thought of the devout worshipper, and embody the theory that the essence of religion is reverence. Kant, as we have seen, emphasised the fact that religion makes promise of a future salvation, but he insisted at least as strenuously that in essence it consists in the recognition of duties as divine commands and in the performance of these with a habitual reference to God. 'Morality,' he added, 'besides recognising in the sanctity of its law an object deserving the utmost reverence, at the religious stage has set forth in the supreme cause that executes these, an object which is to be adored, and which is a revelation of its majesty.'[4] Rauwenhoff, a weighty member of the Dutch school, has most clearly realised the religious importance of the sense of obligation. Religion, he even maintained, only began to be when the objects of primitive faith

[1] *De Natura Deorum*, ii. 28.

[2] *The Divine Institutes* (Eng. tr.), Ante-Nicene Library, 1871, iv. 28.

[3] *Leidenroth*, quoted by Nitzsch, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[4] *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, Vorrede.

evoked some response from the moral consciousness. Reverence, he observes, must have existed from a very early stage, being inspired by the heads of the family and the great men of the tribe, and when any phenomenon occurred which was regarded as the work of a higher being it naturally excited the same sentiment. 'There was something which manifested itself to man, not as power in general but as power over him, which laid its hand upon him, subjected him to itself, and united him to itself, so that he felt himself bound to it, and placed himself thenceforward at its service. This became his God ; and as the religious consciousness is bilateral, the thought of what his God was for him had its counterpart in the thought of what he must be for God.' [1]

It is indeed patent that man, in cultivating relations with the objects of his religious faith, has been influenced by a sense of duty as well as by a regard to his own wants and the desire of a chief good. It is superficial and unjust to think, as Timon did, that 'were the godheads to borrow of men, men would forsake the gods.' Man has been apprehended by the overpowering greatness and the ineffable majesty of the Divine Being. He has thought of God as his king, yea, as King of kings and Lord of lords ; and he has also had loyalty enough to think that, the commands of his sovereign being known, they ought to be obeyed. It has been felt in particular that gratitude was due to God for the bounties of His providence ; and the sentiment has been deeply intensified, as in the religion of Israel by the knowledge of His mighty works in history, and as in Christianity by the experience of the treasures of His grace. This religious type has been marked on the emotional side by the note of a

[1] *Religionsphilosophie*, [2] (Ger. tr.), 1894, p. 59.

deep and sensitive reverence. Its practical impulses have been to pay homage to God in appropriate forms of worship, to render obedience to the laws in which His will has been made known, and to submit in humble resignation to the dispensations of His providence.

The obligation-type of religion is met with in two forms which, if they may be so styled without prejudice, can be distinguished as the mixed and the pure. In the mixed form the sense of duty to God has coexisted with faith and hope in a salvation which is of the Lord. In the pure form it has been detached from hope, and has been the sum of the religion of men who cherished no expectations of a future salvation, and who made no corresponding demands on God. In this chapter we shall illustrate and examine these two forms of religious aspiration.

## I

It is difficult to suppose that there ever was a time when it was not realised that there are religious duties which one ought to perform as well as blessings for which one might hope and pray. This must have been realised ever since man fulfilled two conditions —that he believed in the existence of beings mightier than himself, which had some claim on his respect, and that he had the moral sense which prompted him to render their due to his superiors. The first of these conditions has been satisfied in some degree at every stage of religious history, and the second in some degree so long as man has been man.

Even in the religions of the lower culture there are some objects which appeal to the sentiment of duty. At the totemistic stage the clan-feeling was of great

intensity; and when the totem-species was regarded as the progenitor and the patron of the tribe, it was naturally regarded with feelings that combined something of filial piety with something of patriotic loyalty, and that sought expression in suitable forms of homage and service. When the religious life has been dominated by the animistic philosophy which encompasses the tribe with a great cloud of ghosts and devils, some venerable figures have stood out against the background of the host of evil-minded and capricious spirits, and have urged a claim upon the conscience of the worshippers. The spirit of the great chief or of the wise father could be felt to be still entitled to respect; and as it was believed that they had the same wants as during life in the matter of food, raiment, and shelter, while they were more sensitive than ever to attentions and slights, the counsels of prudence were at least reinforced by the ethical impulse to offer to them gifts which were at once complimentary and beneficial. The obligation to pay honour to the ancestral spirits, and to make some effort to provide them with necessaries and comforts, has been an immemorial feature of the popular religion of China. There the offices of domestic piety have been supplemented by a festival of All Souls, when the ancestral spirits of a region were invited to a banquet at which every arrangement was made for their comfort and enjoyment; and while this was doubtless deemed to be in the interests of the community, it would be uncharitable not to give credit for the same spirit of hospitality which prompts a western city to honour and entertain a company of distinguished visitors.[1] The picturesque incident of the military funeral, in which the charger of the

[1] Doolittle, *Social Life of the Chinese*, 1866.

deceased general is led in the procession, reminds us of the animistic past at which the belongings of a chief were despatched after him for his use in his new world, and when human sacrifice could be added in order to provide him with a bodyguard of warriors and a staff of servants.

In the polytheistic period in which faith had its vision of nobler objects, reverence was deepened, the voice of adoration began to be heard, and there was an earnest of the attitude of self-surrender to the Divine Being. The Vedic hymns, while ever insistent on the needs of the worshippers, and pushing their claims to prosperity with childish frankness and painful importunity, nevertheless contain passages which breathe the spirit of heartfelt piety. This higher note has illustrations in the hymns addressed to Indra and Agni, in which the singer can forget that his chosen divinity is one of gods many and lords many, and can praise the object of worship as the fount of all blessings, 'the worker of mighty deeds beyond compare, and the ruler as well as the joy of his life.' The hymns to Varuna, 'the self of all the Gods,' are practically monotheistic, and the praises rise to the celebration of the moral attributes of God and of His moral government of the world, while the sentiment of obligation finds expression in self-dedication to the truthful and righteous life which is well-pleasing in God's sight.[1] The religion of Greece had a similar strain of devout feeling, and the demands of the worldly eudaemonism were modified by a kindred development of the spirit of moral obligation. The Homeric Hymns picture the great gods as worthy

[1] The higher elements in the doctrine and worship of Varuna are combined in one of the pieces in Muir, *Metrical Translations from the Hymns of the Veda*, 1873.

to be praised for their majesty and their wondrous works—Pallas Athene, Ares, and not least Apollo, 'at whose step down the hall of Zeus the gods tremble, yea, they all start up from their seats when he cometh nigh, holding fast his shining bow.' And in fit words though fewer, the singer magnifies the name of Zeus, 'the best and greatest of the gods, far-glancer, king, fulfiller, who holdeth frequent converse with Themis as she reclines on her seat.' [1] In the golden age of Greece the Olympian Gods fell into discredit, chiefly because too much human nature had been mixed with their divinity, while the hopes of salvation became fluctuating and uncertain; but a greater God emerged to be the sterner guardian of the moral law, and the religion of obligation was established on deeper foundations. Aeschylus and Sophocles bowed in awe before the mighty power that casts down the proud, and fills the earth with the works of retributive justice. Plato taught that the true service of God is moral obedience. Pindar celebrated the beneficent deities that had equipped a world of light and beauty to be the theatre of noble deeds, and he encouraged the good man to accept his calamities, even when they seemed to be causeless and unmerited, without defiance and without repining.

With the pantheistic development of Indian religion which followed upon the Vedic period the feeling of dependence on God was naturally intensified, and even became overwhelming. The Being of whom and through whom and to whom were all things, who was in truth the one truly existent Being whereof all else was a manifestation or a shadow, is adored in the Upanishads in terms that seem to express the uttermost reach of self-forgetting reverence and self-

[1] Edgar, *Homeric Hymns*, 1891, pp. 29, 115.

annihilating devotion of which the human soul is capable. As to the duties which God requires of man there was some uncertainty. The Vedas had been chiefly concerned with the religious duty of sacrifice, and the saintly philosophers were more than doubtful of its value. To some it seemed that the sum of man's duty toward God was that he should strive after the mystical union with the Supreme through the exercises of the ascetic and contemplative life. To others it appeared that man had been placed on earth that he might work, but on condition that he sought no profit for himself either here or hereafter. So it was written :

> Perform all necessary acts, for action
> Is better than inaction ; yet in working
> Work not for recompense, let the sole motive
> Be in the act itself.

And in so doing, it was added, they would be imitators of God, who had said :

> nought remains for me
> To gain by action, yet I work for man
> Unweariedly, and the whole universe
> Would perish if I did not do my work.[1]

For Buddha it was possible to fear, but not to adore, the cosmic system of which the individual found himself an item and the victim—which had dealt out misery with such merciless prodigality, and which had taken measures to perpetuate woe throughout endless aeons. Who could feel it a duty to offer worship to the principle of this grim world-order ? There was, however, one aspect of Buddhism which made it a representative of the religion of obligation. It took the universe as it found it ; and it held that the highest

[1] Bhagavad-Gita, iii. 9, 19.

wisdom lies in ascertaining the laws to which human life is subject, and the manner of their working, and in winning such salvation as is possible by the accommodation of aspiration and purpose to the unchanging and inexorable scheme of things.

Although the Hebrew prophets habitually thought and taught in terms of judgment and salvation, the Old Testament doctrine of God was well fitted to awaken and to foster the spirit of selfless piety. The God of Moses and of the prophets was so unspeakably great that constraint was laid on the worshipper to bow before Him in lowly reverence, to make His glory the chief end, and to lay all the powers and the possessions of the creature as a willing sacrifice on the altar. Isaiah was dominated by a sense of the ineffable majesty of the Almighty, and it seemed to him to be dictated by the eternal fitness of things that 'the lofty looks of man shall be brought low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day' (ii. 11). It was the doctrine of the prophets that righteousness exalteth a nation, which was therefore wise to follow after righteousness, but they also proclaimed that God is King of kings and the Lawgiver of lawgivers, who as such has a sovereign title to the homage and the obedience of His earthly subjects. In the later literature the Law could be spoken of as God's great gift to Israel, and obedience to its precepts as the chiefest privilege and the source of a holy gladness (Ps. 119). The author of the Book of Job disliked the wearisome emphasis on the utility of religion, which, as popularly conceived, he thought to be very doubtful; and he proposed as the exemplar of piety the patriarch who could trust and adore though he did not comprehend, and who when bereft of his

children and his goods, and sorely smitten in his flesh, could nevertheless say, 'the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord' (i. 21).

Mohammed had the prophet's sense of the awful majesty of the Most High, and also the prophet's abhorrence of the idols that rob God of His honour.

Say, God is one God, the eternal God; He begetteth not,[1] neither is He begotten, and there is not any one like unto Him.

God! there is no God but He; the living, the self-subsisting, neither slumber nor sleep seizeth Him, to Him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven and on earth.

O ye misbelievers! I do not serve what ye serve.

Islam means the religion of resignation. It may be that in the original usage the term laid stress on the external and legal side of religion, rather than on the ethical idea of submission to the will of God.[2] But while something has been read into the name, it has been read into it from the Koran, and from the behaviour of the devout Moslem. If reverence and resignation were the essence of religion, and if the worth of a faith were to be determined by its success in propagating these as habits, it would be difficult to dispute the pre-eminence of Mohammedanism. Prayer was called by Mohammed the pillar of religion and the key of paradise, and it is due to his influence that millions of human beings in three continents prostrate themselves before God five times a day, and offer prayers that sound the note of adoration. He also preached a high doctrine of predestination, with the corollary of unquestioning and unrepining acquiescence in the divine appointments, and the teaching has borne abundant fruits in the heroism of the

[1] Koran, cxii., [2], ix.

[2] Sell, art. 'Islam,' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. v.

warrior as well as in the patience of the sufferer. On the positive side, duty to God was summed up in the commandment to confess the true God, and in four points of practice — prayer, alms, fasting and the pilgrimage to Mecca. There are, indeed, obvious defects from the ethical standpoint. The will of God is very inadequately comprehended in a code of which three points belong to ceremonial religion, while moral obedience is only represented by the practice of almsgiving. And the God of Mohammed, while the God of the infinite attributes, falls short of the highest that is suggested from the witness of conscience and that has been revealed in the teaching and the life of Jesus. But in spite of its ethical defects Islam is a notable example of the religion of obligation. The central fact of Mohammed's own experience was his profound sense of the greatness of God and of His rights over His creatures; and though he owed much of his influence to the fact that he made men believe with all their heart in a real Heaven and a real Hell, it is incontestable that the success of his cause was due in part to the fact that he brought the sense of duty into the service of the one God, and made men feel that the Supreme Being had an indisputable claim to be honoured and obeyed.

The sense of duty toward God is strikingly emphasised in the records of the teaching and of the example of Jesus. It is notable that the three petitions which have the place of honour in the Lord's prayer—' hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done '—have regard to the glory and the dominion of God and only indirectly to the interests of sinful and suffering man. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says of our Lord that ' for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross,

despising shame' (Heb. xii. 2), but the same writer bore better witness to the Jesus of the Gospels when he summed up His earthly mission in the words, 'Lo, I am come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God' (x. 7). The spirit of His ministry was anticipated in the one saying that is recorded from the years of His childhood: 'Wist ye not that I must be about My father's business?' (Luke ii. 49), and the spirit of the Man of Sorrows was uttered in the cry of Gethsemane: 'Father, not what I will, but what Thou wilt' (Mark xiv. 36). It is the central message of the Fourth Gospel that Christ was the incarnation of the eternal Logos; but the same Gospel is at pains to emphasise the self-subjection and the obedience of the Son, and the earthly mission is summed up in the words, 'I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given me to do' (John xvii. 4). St. Paul, while pre-eminently the apostle of redemption, was possessed from first to last by a deep sense of obligation towards Him 'of whom and through whom and to whom are all things.'

There is a vulgar opinion, for which philosophers have some responsibility, that Christian morality is mercenary—having its sole spring in the fear of punishment and the expectation of heavenly rewards. What is of course true is that the Christian has believed in Heaven and Hell, but it is also true that in every age of the Church there have been many who declared that it was not only or chiefly because of the promises and the threatenings of God that they strove to keep His commandments. Their obedience had other roots—reverence for the divine majesty, loyalty to the heavenly King, gratitude to the God of providence and the God of grace. Clement of Alexandria gives

prominence to this feature in his picture of the Christian Gnostic :

> The Gnostic does not do good out of fear. And no more does he do it from hope of promised recompense. His choice is to do good out of love, and for the sake of its own excellence, and so as to live his life after the image and likeness of the Lord. It is for the sake of the commandment, not of the promise, that he chooses good. It is on God, not on His gifts, that his heart is set. ' Let me be in what is Thine, O omnipotent God,' is his prayer ; ' and if I am there, I am near Thee.' [1]

Augustine, like Paul before him, ascribed his conversion, not to the attraction of a great and precious promise, but to a rebuke and a command of the King that bore down opposition. The text that came to him in power as he agonised in the garden was ' not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof ' (Rom. xiii. 13-14). And if Paul had been willing to be accursed for the sake of his brethren, Augustine was at least prepared to serve God with the fidelity of a loyal subject even if it should please Him to ordain that he was to go on battling for evermore with temptations and miseries like those of earth. The conversion of St. Francis of Assisi, who in his youth had had dreams of worldly greatness, was chiefly due to the spell that was laid on his soul by the Saviour's example of self-renunciation, and by the sternness of the demands which were made in the charter and the commission of the disciples (Matt. x. 5 ff.).

The asceticism of the ancient Church had its roots, not merely in the hope of heavenly compensations,

[1] *Stromateis*, iv. 22, 3.

but also in the delight of obeying to the uttermost. The following, from a discourse ascribed to Tauler, illustrates the measure of abandonment to the will of God which was attained by the medieval saint:

An eminent theologian, who was also of a humble heart, desired to meet a servant of God well advanced towards perfection in order that he might know the way of truth. Having asked this favour, he heard a voice saying unto him: 'Go to the door of a certain church and there thou shalt find the man who will teach thee the way of truth.' On hearing these words, he went to the vestibule of the church, and there he found a mendicant, a pale and emaciated figure, bare-footed and clothed in rags. On questioning him he found that the man was full of celestial wisdom. Then they conversed.

The theologian wished him good day, and the mendicant replied that he did not remember ever to have had a bad day.

'God give thee prosperity, my son.'

'I have never been discontented with my lot.'

'God give thee happiness.'

'I have always had happiness.'

'Pray explain,' said the theologian. 'Willingly,' he replied. 'I have said that I have never had an unhappy day. When I am hungry, I praise God. If it is cold, if rain, snow or hail fall on me, I praise God; if the tempest rage, I still praise Him. If I am miserable and despised, I praise Him still. I have said that I am always content with my lot. I know that I live with God, and I am therefore persuaded that whatever He does is for the best. Whatever He permits to happen, be it sweet or bitter, I receive from His hands with joy as a perfect gift. I have said that I am always happy. I am devoted to the divine will, and all that God wishes I wish also. How could I lose my happiness?'

'But what,' said the theologian, 'if the Divine Majesty willed to plunge thee into the abyss?'

'If He wished to plunge me into the abyss,' replied the mendicant, 'would I not have my two arms with which to embrace Him? One is humility, the other is love, and so my

God would go down with me to the bottom of the abyss, which would become Heaven because God would be there.'

The theologian continued:

'When didst thou find God?'

'When I ceased from all creatures.'

'Wherewith is God pleased?'

'With pure hearts and men of good will.'

'What art thou?'

'A king.'

'Where is thy kingdom?'

'In my soul. I have learned so to rule it, that all the feelings and all the powers of my soul are subject unto me. I prefer my kingdom to all the kingdoms of this world.'

'How hast thou reached this perfection?'

'By silence, meditation, and union with God. In nothing that is lower than God did I find rest. But I have found God, and in Him repose and peace eternal.'

These sentiments doubtless do not now excite the unqualified admiration which they won from devout souls of the Middle Ages. We must think that there is a large positive side of duty towards God; and that the godly mendicant was guilty of a sin of omission in his failure to realise that God had given him work to do, if not as a duty to himself, at least as a service to the society which had to board and clothe him, and which later on would be at the expense of his funeral. But at least it was a great example of the spirit in which duty to God requires us to front the irretrievable calamities and the inexorable ills. 'The saints,' says Fénelon, 'have uttered many things which may be reduced to this saying—"that one hath no longer any self and interested desire, neither about merit, perfection nor eternal happiness."' 'They see Heaven open for them,' says St. Francis of Sales, 'they see a thousand miseries and labours upon the earth; the one and the other are indifferent to their choice; and

nothing but the will of God can give the counterpoise to their hearts.' [1]

It is an honourable distinction of the Reformed Church strictly so-called, that it has given impressive utterance to the conviction that duty to God is an essential part, if not even the most distinctive part, of religion. For Calvin as for Luther there was a gospel whose core was the doctrine of Justification by Faith, but Calvin laid still more emphasis on the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. It may be said to be the keynote of his system that all created things, visible and invisible, the whole furniture of earth and the choir of Heaven, angels fallen and unfallen, unregenerate and regenerate sinners of mankind, have existed and exist to the end that, wittingly or unwittingly, voluntarily or involuntarily, by their obedience or their rebellion, their salvation or their doom, they may contribute to the exhibition of the divine perfections and to the fulfilment of the divine purposes. This theocentric idea is put in the forefront of the Shorter Catechism : man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever. And in summing up the end as the glory of God it certainly was not meant, as Heine has mockingly said, that God had created man and other intelligent beings so that there might be a circle of readers to study the works of the divine author and to applaud them. The essence of the conception was that finite beings were created that they might reproduce the excellences of the all-perfect Being according to their several capacities, and also further His beneficent and holy plans according to the measure of their powers. In the Calvinistic Confessions, which seem to have been little consulted by critics of theological ethics, it is emphatically denied that the hope

[1] *Maxims of the Saints*, p. 30.

of Heaven and the fear of Hell are the proper motives of good works. The chief stress was laid on the claims of God and the motive of gratitude.

'Good works,' it is said in the Second Helvetic Confession, 'ought not to be performed to the end that we may thereby merit eternal life, which is the gift of God, nor out of ostentation, which our Lord condemned, nor for gain, which He also condemned, but with an eye to the glory of God, and the adornment of our vocation, and the manifestation of gratitude, and the good of our neighbour.'[1]

The same theocentric attitude is found in the great Puritans.

'We cannot but note,' says Howe, 'how altered a thing religion is now become. Almost the whole business of it, even among them that more seriously mind anything belonging to it, is a fear of going to Hell, and hence perpetual endless scruples, doubts and inquiries about marks and signs of that grace which is necessary to their being saved—as if the intention were to beat down the price to the very lowest, and dodge always, and cheapen Heaven to the utmost.[2] Learn to look on things as they are, and not according to their aspect in your affairs. Is it not a greater thing that He is God than that He is your God? It is a purer, a more noble and generous affection to Him you are to aim at than what is measured only by your private interest. Is that boundless fulness of life, glory and all perfection to be all estimated by the capacity and concerns of a silly worm?'[3] 'To taste and prove the acceptableness of His will, to reckon it a royal law of liberty, so as to account ourselves the more free by how much we are the more bound, to become patient of government, not apt to chafe at the bridle, or spurn and kick at the boundaries that hem us in: this is a temper that hath not more of duty in it than it hath of delight.'[4]

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[1] Chap. xvi. 6. [2] *Works*, ii. p. 237. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 231.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 41. See also Jonathan Edwards, *On the Religious Affections*, iii. 2.

Calvinism engendered a sense of responsibility to God which had notable products and by-products. It gave rise to an ideal of family life which might not be that of the bright and happy home, but which at least made the home to be a realm of duty and a nursery of character. It fostered a sense of political duty which made man willing to endure persecution, or to avert it by taking a hand in a revolution. There was also an interesting by-product in the economic sphere. Calvinistic Christianity produced a type of man who, while rejoicing in the gospel, looked on his secular business as a vital part of the work which God had given him to do; he made no demands in the matter of pleasure—Troeltsch calls him an intramundane ascetic; but just because of his industry and his simple life he was bound to prosper in business and even to lay the foundations of a fortune; and the result was that in Scotland and elsewhere he proved to be a most important factor in the accumulation of the stock of capital which, however it may eventually be decided to administer it, must continue to be the material foundation of national well-being.[1]

The Scottish Moderates of the eighteenth century represented a different variety of the obligation-type of religion. In some histories of the Scottish Church they are depicted as crypto-pagans, whose creed supplied little except the doctrines of morality on which to discourse, and who also exemplified their ethical precepts very poorly in their lives. This account has some support in the autobiography of Carlyle of Inveresk, but it is very unjust to the acknowledged heads of the school, who shared the apologetic zeal of Butler and Paley, and were no less

[1] Cf. Troeltsch, *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen*, 1919, iii. 3; Max Weber, *Religionssoziologie*, 1920, i. pp. 84 ff.

respected for their character than for their abilities and their learning. On a broad view of Scottish Protestantism it may be said, if we may use the Hegelian formula, that Evangelicalism and Moderatism were the antitheses which resulted from the development of the two principles that had been peacefully associated in primitive Calvinism. The Evangelical fastened on the great salvation, the Moderate on duty to God, and each could seem to put asunder the things that Paul and Calvin had joined together. A quotation from Leechman may illustrate the stress laid on religion as a service of adoration and obedience which is due to God :

> Let us consider that mankind are intended to pay homage to their Creator. We not only claim to be distinguished from the brute creation, but we boast that we are a more dignified rank of creatures. One principal part of this superior dignity is that, of all the inhabitants of this lower world, man is the only creature who can contemplate the grandeur, the beauty, the order and harmony of the universe. Without man all these astonishing scenes which we behold around us would have been displayed in vain to any inhabitant of this earth. Man, therefore, as he only is capable of being, seems intended to be the high priest of nature, and is placed in this magnificent temple of God, that he may offer up the incense of thanks for himself, and for the brute and insensible part of creation.[1]

In the Evangelical Revival of the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, the Scottish pulpit laid the chief emphasis on what Chalmers called the peculiar doctrines of Christianity which were summed up as ruin, redemption and regeneration. More recently the Scottish Church has developed an eclectic combination of the features of the two schools, which the old Moderate would have pronounced to be a

[1] *Sermons*, 1789.

kind of Evangelicalism, and the old Evangelical would still more confidently have declared to be an insidious and more dangerous form of Moderatism. Whether it is or is not a higher synthesis is matter of opinion. What is obvious is that during the last half-century the mind of the Protestant Church has more and more laid the accent on the obligational side of Christianity. This feature has been noticeable in the religion of youth, especially as developed in the Student Christian Movement, in which Christ is set forth as one worthy to be crowned the king over the lives of men, and as the leader whom it is the joy of loyal hearts to follow and to serve. And the same spirit is widely diffused throughout the Churches. The modern congregation is less sympathetic towards the hymns of mystical union than towards the appeal to 'fight the good fight with all thy might,' and the songs of the New Jerusalem are not thought to evoke the same response as the call to 'build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land.'

II

Thus far we have been considering the mixed form of the religion of obligation, in which the sense of duty to God has been conjoined with, and also in some degree has been nourished by, the worshipper's faith and hope in the God of his salvation. We have next to consider the pure form, in which the feeling of obligation towards God has been completely detached from the expectation of special divine protection and blessing. This religious rigorism has been widely diffused in space and time, and it has also been very influentially voiced — in oriental antiquity by

the Confucianism of Confucius, in the classical world by the Stoic philosophers, and in modern Europe by the theological Rationalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

1. The religion of Confucius was a striking illustration of dutiful religion, for he hoped for nothing from God, and yet he believed in God, he revered God, and he cast his thought and his life in the moulds of obedience and submission. Certainly he was no prophet. The prophet has a message concerning God which burns as a fire within him until it be delivered, and Confucius was more than reticent about divine things. 'The subjects on which the Master did not talk were these: extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder, and spiritual beings.'[1] He preferred, he said, to imitate the silence of God. Asked to speak, the Master said, 'Does Heaven speak? The four seasons pursue their courses and all things are continually being produced, but does Heaven say anything?' When he did open his mouth on divine things it was often to profess his ignorance. He had no message about the after life. 'While you do not know life,' he said, 'how can you know about death?' The meaning of sacrifice was a mystery to him. Asked the meaning of the great sacrifice, he said, 'I do not know: he that knew its meaning could govern an empire.' Confucius had no gospel of supernatural deliverance, and indeed on his principles redemption and grace were unnecessary. A nation only needed to be well governed. 'If a kingly sovereign were to appear, by the end of one generation natural goodness would prevail.' The individual did not require it, for good-

[1] This and the following quotations are taken from *The Confucian Analects:* vol. i. of Legge's *Chinese Classics*, 1861. Giles, *The Sayings of Confucius*, 1907, has some variant renderings.

ness was the principal thing, and goodness was in his own power. 'Is any one able for one day to apply his strength to virtue? I have not seen the case in which his strength would be insufficient.' And again the Master said, 'Is virtue a thing remote? I wish to be virtuous, and lo! virtue is at hand.' When he fell grievously ill it did not occur to him that he might have benefit from prayer, and when a disciple reminded him that it was an ancient rule he said that his praying—probably meaning that *laborare est orare*—had been for a long time. But if Confucius was no prophet, and had no evangel, he was at least a devout man, and with enough of a creed to sustain his piety. He has been called an Agnostic, but his sayings imply that he knew much more than that the Supreme Being exists. He spoke of the majesty of Heaven: 'it is only Heaven that is grand.' He had a firm belief in the divine sovereignty. 'It is so ordered,' was a favourite expression. The sickness or the death of a friend was spoken of as an appointment of Heaven. And he attributed to Heaven the properties of personal spirit. He said that Heaven knew him—however men might misknow him. Moreover, Heaven was righteous: the source of all good gifts, it had implanted virtue in men, and it raised up instruments from time to time to promote the cause of truth. And Heaven judges the world in righteousness. There were those who thought that it was more useful to pray to the spirits than to honour the Highest—which was expressed in the adage that 'it is better to be civil to the kitchen-god than to the god of the inner sanctum.' The Master said, 'It is false: he who sins against Heaven can rely on the intercession of none.' The essence of the piety of Confucius was reverence, and his actions, as he would have expressed it, were con-

formable. His reverence for Heaven and its dispensations was profound. 'There are three things,' he said, 'of which the superior man stands in awe—the ordinances of Heaven, great men, and the words of the sages.' He was deeply affected by the great sacrifice in which homage was paid to Heaven; and he also praised the scrupulous performance of the rites, hallowed by the practice of antiquity, by which respect was shown to the spirits of the mighty dead and other ancestral spirits. He praised great men of old for the homage which they rendered to God and to their ancestors. 'Parents when dead should be sacrificed to according to propriety.' He loved the sacrificial ritual, and was of opinion that the ceremony was well worth maintaining 'even at the cost of a sheep and more.' And if Heaven was honoured by sacrifice, still more was it honoured by righteousness. It is not indeed so explicitly affirmed as in the Old Testament that morality is the service of God, but the ethical code which it was his great aim in life to enforce was undoubtedly chief among the ordinances of Heaven of which he claimed to have knowledge, and which he called on man to revere. And if righteousness was according to the will of Heaven, wickedness was sin against Heaven, which only Heaven could forgive. With obedience was conjoined submission to the will of Heaven. 'The superior man,' he said, 'is satisfied and composed, the mean man is always full of distress.' Among his heroes were men of former days who had suffered the loss of all temporal goods, and who 'did not utter a murmuring word.' For himself he said, 'I do not murmur against Heaven.'

2. The religion of reverence and submission has its classical monument in Stoicism. The typical Stoic made no demands on God for any blessings other than

those which are bestowed by Providence in the course of nature. The things that are in a man's own power, it was held, include virtuous thoughts, feelings and actions, and there was therefore no need for a salvation of the soul. A particular Providence also was unnecessary. The Gods, said Marcus Aurelius, had at least taken counsel for the interests of the universe; and if they had taken no counsel for the unit in the crowd, the individual had good cause, not only to make the best of, but even to welcome, those things which befell him as a corollary of the system which was conceived in the general interests.[1] Nor did the Stoic make any claim for immortality. The chief consolation offered by Seneca for the brevity of human life is that it is really a long life if a full and good use be made of it. Marcus Aurelius stated a case in support of the doctrine of immortality, but he thought it probable that God in His wisdom had decreed against it. But though nothing more was expected at the hand of God, reason enough was found in God Himself—even were He no more than the impersonal soul of the world—and in His mighty works and bountiful gifts, why man should adore, obey and submit. The three characteristic notes may be illustrated from Epictetus. This is his tribute of adoring reverence:

> What words are enough to praise the works of Providence? If we had sense we ought to do nothing else, in public and in private, than praise God and give Him due thanks. Ought we not, as we dig and plough and eat, to sing the hymn to God—'Great is God that He gave us these instruments wherewith we till the earth; that He gave us hands, and a belly, and the power to grow without knowing it, and draw

[1] *Meditations*, vi. 14.

our breath in sleep.' At every moment we ought to sing these praises, and above all the greatest and divinest praise, that God gave us the faculty to comprehend these gifts and to use the way of reason. More than that: since most of you are walking in blindness, should there not be some one to discharge the duty for you all? What else can a lame old man as I am do but chant the praise of God? If, indeed, I were a nightingale, I should sing as a nightingale; if a swan, as a swan; but as I am a rational creature, I must praise God.[1]

By the soul which thus bowed before God duty was naturally construed as obedience to the will of God. The duty of the rational creature was to attach himself to God, 'so that what God wills he may will to do, and what God wills not he may not will either.'[2] Especially was God to be magnified by patient and cheerful endurance. 'I must die, but must I die groaning? I must be imprisoned, but must I whine as well? I must suffer exile: can any one then hinder me from going with a smile, and a good courage and at peace?'[3]

In the *Aufklärung* of the eighteenth century it was common to discount the promises of religion, and to resolve it into reverence, righteousness and resignation. The customary view was that religion is morality with the accompaniment of a recognition of man's dependence on the Divine Being. 'The most perfect prayer,' Rousseau declared, 'is complete resignation to the dispensations of the divine will—not what I will but what Thou wilt. Every other prayer is superfluous, and in contradiction with this.' 'God of all worlds and of all beings,' wrote Voltaire, 'the only prayer that it is meet to offer Thee is submission; for to what purpose shall we make petitions to Him who

[1] *The Discourses* (Eng. tr.), 1916, i. 16.
[2] *Ibid.*, iv. 1. [3] *Ibid.*, i. 1.

has ordered all, provided for all, and linked all things together from the beginning?'[1] Goethe laid the stress on reverence as the essence of all that has been counted religion.

'In reverence,' he says, 'lies the worth, here lies the business of all true religions; whereof there are only three, according to the objects towards which they direct our attention. The religion which founds itself on reverence for what is above us, we denominate the ethnic. The second, which founds itself on reverence for what is around us, we denominate the philosophical. The third religion, grounded on reverence for what is beneath us, we name the Christian. What a task was it, not only to be patient with the earth, and let it lie beneath us, we appealing to a higher birthplace; but also to recognise humility and poverty, mockery and despite, disgrace and wretchedness, suffering and death, to recognise these things as divine; nay, even on sin and crime to look not as hindrances, but to honour and love them as furtherances of what is holy! This being attained the human species cannot retrograde, and we may say that the Christian religion having once appeared cannot again vanish.'[2]

The doctrine of Goethe was adopted by Carlyle, who exhorted men to adore in presence of the 'unspeakable perfect miracle' of the universe, and to look with a godly fear upon the God who has made bare His holy arm in the sight of the nations, and wrought terrible things in His wrath against sin. Matthew Arnold taught that religion is morality, but a morality that is touched with emotion because of the accompanying confidence in a divine power that makes for righteousness.

[1] Quoted by Heiler, *Das Gebet*, [4], 1921, who has collected other examples of the philosophical prayer.

[2] *Wilhelm Meister's Travels* (trans. by Carlyle), chap. x.

III

The obligation-type of religion, representing as it does the response of the moral nature to the manifestation of the Divine Being, is entitled to be treated with the utmost respect. Its claims may, indeed, be rated much higher. There is nothing greater than the mixed form in which man has firmly believed in the salvation of God, at the same time that he deemed it a sufficient reason for doing and enduring the will of God that it was His holy and righteous will. The pure form, in which duty to God is isolated from hope in God, has a moral grandeur which makes it easy to overlook or to condone its religious inadequacy. We conclude with some observations on the two forms.

Our review has made it sufficiently clear that the sense of duty to God can be a prominent element in experience even when the soul confidently rejoices in the promises of God. The combination, as was pointed out, is a perfectly natural one. Should it be said to be impossible, then by parity of reasoning it should be impossible for a son to know that he was his father's heir and at the same time to be actuated in his conduct by filial piety and duty. It may even be held that the sentiment of obligation is deepened and strengthened through faith in the God of salvation ; for the ethical purity of the motive of gratitude is above suspicion, and if Epictetus was moved to praise God for the bounties of His providence, much more was Paul so moved when in addition to the providential bounties he could make mention of the riches of His grace.

The sense of duty to God which has been conspicuous on the heights of religious thought and endeavour has also been a considerable factor in the religious life of the many. It was the multitude, it is true, which

was responsible for the generalisation that the exclusively Christian motives for well-doing are the fear of Hell and the hope of Heaven. At the same time it has recognised that there are duties which it owes to God, as evidenced by the general agreement to assemble for common worship. The motives of worship are various; and it is observable that the crowded churches have been those in which attendance was reckoned as a merit, and in which the soul was thrilled by the repetition of the great sacrifice, or again those in which an arresting gospel was preached and real illumination was received touching the truths and the requirements of the faith. But it is also obvious that another incentive has been the conviction that it is required by a special code of duty to pay homage to the Highest, and to re-dedicate oneself to His service. And though the disposition of the multitude has been to render the easier service of ceremonial obedience, it cannot be doubted that many of the great deeds of the world, and much of its drudgery, has been done in the Taskmaster's eye, and still less that much of its work and labour of love has been inspired by the precepts and the example of Jesus Christ. In the recent Protestant period, as was observed, the emphasis has shifted from salvation to obligation, and this may be welcomed even by those who believe that religion and salvation should be synonyms. For Christianity, which has everything to fear from moral indifference and moral scepticism, has everything to hope from the heightening of moral ideals and the deepening of moral earnestness. It may therefore be made a question whether sufficient account has been taken, in the theory of Christian education, of the necessity of laying the foundations of religious character in the inculcation of reverence and of the sense of duty to

Almighty God. The way of the God of history was to place His people under the stern dispensation of the Law so that they might be educated to the appreciation of the gospel of forgiveness and liberty, and it may be that this should be followed as the model in the spiritual education of the individual. It has to be added that the Protestant Church has too little taken to heart the lesson which is taught by the patristic and the medieval Church, and which was realised by Calvin —that man can be brought to admit the claims of the Highest and to find his deepest joy in self-forgetting conformity to the divine will in obedience and resignation. In certain past ages in which there was a weakening and a wavering of faith in a traditional creed, religion survived in the form of duty to God, and the nobler kind of man fell back on the witness of his spirit to the existence of a Supreme Being, and to the authority of the law which had conscience for its herald. And it is in this mould, doubtless, that the religious life of high-souled men would be cast in the future if it should become the verdict of the intellectual world that the knowledge of divine things possessed by the Church had been greatly overestimated, and that there was a flaw in the title-deeds on which so high hopes had been built. Even if the light in which the world has rejoiced were reduced to a twilight, it would still be as obvious as it was to Seneca and Marcus Aurelius that the universe manifests a majestic and mighty Power to which a man owes his being, his marvellous endowment, and the thrilling adventure of the life on earth ; and a constraint would still be felt, and perhaps more deeply than in the limited universe of antiquity, to bow in adoring reverence before the Lord of the unmeasured systems and the unnumbered aeons. As before, also, it is to be

expected that duty would be recognised as the chiefest ordinance of this sovereign Power, and resignation as the grace which is the seemly complement of the service of virtue. There is, in fact, much of this attitude and spirit in the religious confessions of the poets of our troubled age, so many of whom

> Know not what to fear or hope,
> But only that His will is best.[1]

While, however, it need not be expected that mankind will ever fall below the theory of the religion of obligation, it has to be observed that when it has been proposed as the whole of religion this has been rejected as insufficient to meet the needs of the human situation. Three instances have been given when the doctrine has been impressively preached, and in each case it came to be weighed in the balances by the religious mind and was found wanting. This may be said to have been the verdict of China. The popular religion which bears the name of Confucius made much of the protection and prosperity to be hoped for through commerce with the spirits; but China also found room for Taoism, which was understood by the mystical to offer union with God and by the vulgar to promise length of days; while at a later date it gave a warm welcome to Buddhism, which, in its popularised form, alleviated the ills of human life by the consolation of a heavenly friendship, and gave to Nirvana the characters of a Paradise. When the Graeco-Roman world was in quest of a higher religion it had the choice of deciding between Stoicism and Christianity; but though Stoicism had many circumstances in its favour, the decision was emphatically given for the system which had not only a sublime

[1] For other examples see *Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse*, 1924.

moral code, but had also at the heart of it the gospel of the living Saviour, of the forgiveness of sins and of the eternal salvation. There was a similar sequel, though less decisive and lasting, to the moralisation of religion which was attempted in the rationalistic schools of the eighteenth century. Throughout a great part of Europe, and notably in the Protestant countries, there arose a hunger for a religious message which should have the riches of a gospel commensurate with the spiritual distress of the human lot, and the sequel was another period of evangelical faith and fervour.

The moral from these historical cases seems clearly to be that mankind expects a religion to be a salvation, and that a scheme of thought which reduces it to reverence and the service of God is adjudged to leave out the essential element. This judgment, it has to be added, is supported by arguments and testimonies which the school of religious obligation has itself supplied. When it has been held that the essence of religion is to glorify and to serve God, and when this has been accepted as man's chief end, it has been usual to make the discovery that the help of God is needed, if not that His will should be known, at least that it should be faithfully done and patiently endured. It was the doctrine of the Old Testament prophets that the people ought to win the divine favour by keeping the divine commandments, but it appeared that the keeping of the commandments was the insuperable difficulty for flesh and blood, and so they looked to God to write His law in the hearts of the people, and to pour out His spirit upon all flesh. In his Pharisaic period Paul realised that the religion of obligation made an impossible demand on human nature, and perhaps the deepest reason for his rejoicing in Christ was that he

had received from Him through life in the Spirit an endowment of moral power which made it possible to render the obedience that would otherwise have continued to mock him as an unattainable ideal. And similarly certain of the Stoics made the discovery that the help of God was necessary in order to the perfect service of God. Cleanthes at least prayed for light. 'Do thou,' so he prays in the famous hymn, 'Zeus, wrapt in cloud and bright lightnings, save mankind from woful ignorance; do thou, Father, dispel it from the soul that so we may requite thee with honour.' Marcus Aurelius speaks respectfully of the doctrine of his school that virtue was one of the things which had been put in our own power, and that no supernatural help is needed, but apparently his own opinion was that grace is needed and that gracious help is given. 'The gods, you say, have put this in my power. Who told thee that the gods do not co-operate with us even in the things that are in our power? Begin at any rate with prayers for the clean heart and the like, and see what comes of it.'[1] The religion of unmixed and unassisted obligation has an impressive aspect of moral grandeur and of selfless sublimity, and it may be, as has been indicated, that it is sometimes a necessary stage in the education of a people or of a generation; but the truth is that it is not adequate to the terrestrial situation, and in view of the grim conditions of man's lot, and especially of the urgency of his spiritual needs, it is not strange that in the witness and the experience of the greatest in the Kingdom of God it has been associated with the faith and the hopes that lay hold on the plenitude of the mercies and of the resources of the infinite Being.

[1] *Meditations*, ix. 40.

# CHAPTER VIII

## RELIGION AS LOVE OF GOD

It has been held that religion is in its essence an affair of the heart, and that theological beliefs and sacred rites had their roots in religious emotion. This view was so far favoured by the genius of language that it coined the terms *Pietas* and *Frömmigkeit* as synonyms for religion. The view is also common to a number of philosophical theories which have been grouped under the rubric of 'the aesthetic interpretation.' And two of these have had a large vogue in ancient and modern times. The most celebrated is the doctrine that fear is the spring of religion—which might even be reckoned the nightmare of the human race—and that its observances are the measures which man has devised with a view to protect himself against the real and the imaginary perils of his lot. It was made famous by Lucretius, it was revived by Hobbes and Hume, and Mach takes credit for having re-discovered it. His little son, the scientist tells us, brought to him a young sparrow which had fallen out of its nest, and it was resolved in a family council to try to bring it up. No difficulty was found in feeding it: it was offered insects, and instinct saw to it that they were devoured; and so the bird throve, and grew in size and intelligence. Then another tendency manifested itself:

> By day it was very trustful and amiable, but in the evening its behaviour regularly changed. It became fearful, sought out the highest perches in the room, and only settled when it

found that it was prevented by the ceiling from mounting any higher. When darkness came on, it was completely transformed. If any one approached it, its feathers bristled, and it began to sputter, and to show signs of terror and a veritable fear of goblins. This was obviously useful for a creature which in normal circumstances might expect at any moment to be swallowed by some monster. The behaviour strengthened me in the opinion that the fears which I had noticed in my children—as when in the semi-darkness one could take a coal-scuttle with an open lid for a yawning dragon—were hereditary and not acquired.[1]

The inference drawn by Mach from these observations was that *Gespensterfurcht* has been the mother of the religions, and he added that it seemed to him probable that, notwithstanding the praiseworthy efforts of the Higher Criticism, a considerable time will elapse before reason proves to be a match for the instinctive fear that peoples the darkness with terrors.

The second of the ' aesthetic ' explanations is due to Schleiermacher, who thought that the world of culture, which was unable to agree on a theological creed, might at least consent to cultivate the spirit of piety. Religion, he said, was neither metaphysical doctrine nor morality, but a feeling for the Infinite.

' The common element,' he says, ' in all devout experience, and consequently the essence of piety, is that we are conscious of ourselves as absolutely dependent—*i.e.* as dependent on God. To seek and find the Infinite and Eternal in all that lives and moves, in all growth and change, in all action and suffering, and only to possess and to know life itself by immediate feeling in relation to this Being—that is religion. To find the Infinite is to satisfy the longing soul, and when it hides itself the soul is in bondage and travail, distress and death.' [2]

[1] *Die Analyse der Empfindungen*, 1922, p. 61.
[2] *Der christliche Glaube*, 1821, pp. 9 ff.

There is a third theory, of a cognate type, which is entitled to more consideration than it has hitherto received. If religion be essentially a matter of feeling, and if we are to pitch on a single feeling as the spring and the soul of the religious life, a good deal can be said in support of the primacy of love. The religious instinct involves an impulse towards the Divine Being; and the instinct therefore may be interpreted as a rudimentary form of love. And this doctrine has been definitely propounded. Plotinus taught that as the soul is different from God, while yet it is derived from Him, it necessarily loves Him. 'Every soul in its natural character,' he says, 'loves God and desires to be one with Him: after the manner of a maiden—the love of the Beautiful for the Beautiful.'[1] 'The first appetite of man,' says Jeremy Taylor, 'is to be like God, in order to which we have naturally no instrument but love and the consequents thereof.' 'Disobedience is contrary to the natural love we bear to God. And from this first appetite of man to be like God, and the first natural instrument of it, love, descend all the first obligations of religion.'[2]

On the general question it may be said that religion cannot be reduced to feeling, and that *a fortiori* it cannot be reduced to any single feeling. The service which was rendered by Lucretius and Schleiermacher was to draw attention to factors which have played an important part, and their mistake was to exaggerate their importance. It is unquestionable that the spirit of fear has been an inspiring and moulding principle, while

[1] *Ennead*, vi. 9, 9. So Professor A. W. Mair translates. Dean Inge renders 'as the daughter of a noble father feels a noble love' (*op. cit.*, ii. p. 139).

[2] *Works*, 1822, ii. p. xxi.

the sense of dependence may not less be regarded as fundamental. But there is good ground also for holding that there has been a great deal in the religious behaviour of mankind which is most naturally explained by the theory that man can love God, and that it has been a very common thing to love God. There are types of piety in which the love of God has been a prominent feature, and others of which it has been the distinctive badge.

I

Love has been referred to as a feeling, but it is a great deal more. In popular usage the accent chiefly falls on the feeling-element, which is also known as affection, tenderness, or attachment. This is closely bound up with joy in the object, and love has even been identified with the pleasurable experience. 'Love,' says Spinoza, 'is nothing but pleasure accompanying the idea of an external cause,' and in accordance with this he defines love of God as 'the joy which is felt when things are contemplated with the accompaniment of the idea of God as their cause.'[1] But there is more in love than in joy, as there is more in the hand-clasp and the embrace than there is in the gladness that is felt in the presence of a friend. And joy may disappear, while yet love may survive as pity or compassion. Joy is in fact only one of a group of emotions which attend on love, and which take their orders from it. 'In all love,' says Mr. Shand, 'there is an organisation of the lesser systems of many emotions—as those of fear, anger, joy, and sorrow. In the presence of anything we love we are disposed to feel joy, and in prolonged absence from it, sorrow,

[1] *Ethica*, iii. 13; *Schol.*, v. 32.

and at the suggestion of danger to feel the fear of losing it, and when it is attacked to feel anger at the assailant.' [1] On the conative side love exhibits a remarkable combination of interestedness and disinterestedness. It appears to be equally possessed by the instinct of self-affirmation and by the sense of pure obligation. For it has an appropriating impulse which cherishes great ambitions for the self, and also an expropriating impulse which must lay something, and can ask to lay everything, upon the altar of sacrifice. The primary impulse of love is to seek to be united to its object. It longs for the presence of the object, and seeks to be joined with it in an intimate and enduring union. *Amor non quiescit nisi in amato.* The appropriating impulse may take the form of a demand for the exclusive possession of the object, but it may also be content with a special or privileged tenure. This aspect is illustrated in the jealousy of a mother's love, in the ideal that has been formed of the bosom-friend, and above all in the imperious claims that are recognised in the bond of marriage. On the disinterested side the impulse is to give all which is needed or valued by the object beloved, and which it is in the power of loving hands to bestow.

Of these two aspects of the paradox of love, one was emphasised by Plato in the *Symposium*, the other by St. Paul in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. In Plato's view love was a craving for treasures of which the soul is in want; and so he said that its mother was a beggar, while its father was a king. The good for which the soul hungers is beauty. There is a sense-bound love, inspired by the vulgar Aphrodite, which pursues earthly shadows and base counterfeits, and

[1] *The Foundations of Character*, [2], 1920, p. 35.

there is a spiritual love, inspired by the heavenly Aphrodite, which follows after the things divinely fair that have their seat in the eternal world. And love being desire, it followed that it would cease with fruition. It is not permitted to suppose that Paul had read the dialogue, but it is at least a curious coincidence that he was moved to compose a hymn in praise of love—as if struck by Plato's remark that while some had written well about salt, none had written adequately of love; that he expressed his loathing of the sin against nature which is so unpleasantly prominent in Plato's discussions; that he emphatically denied that love is destined to vanish away; and that he made the distinctive feature to be, not love's hungry craving, but its self-forgetting and gracious ministries. Its essence is that it 'suffereth long, and is kind—beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things' (1 Cor. xiii. 7). If anything be missed in the immortal panegyric it is that St. Paul only dwells on the love which seeks to bless man, and says nothing of its endeavours and its joys when, as in his own experience, it enters the heavenly world and lays hold of God and His Christ.

This general pattern of love, now, has been abundantly reproduced in the web of religious experiences and activities. There are numerous and persistent phenomena of the sacred sphere concerning which it can only be said that, if they have not been inspired by love, they have at least been very successful imitations of the ways in which love is wont to utter itself. The feeling of tenderness for a divine object has found some expression even in the religions of the lower culture, while every higher religion has had its sacred literature in which fervent profession is made of devotion to the Divine Being. This divine

love, next, has been true to type in that it has exemplified the organising power which the psychologist ascribes to the sentiment. It has been waited on by the customary staff of emotions, whereby its influence has been greatly extended, at the same time that the things done in its name, and especially by anger and fear, have not seldom brought it into ill repute. Further, the paradox of love has been reflected throughout the whole range of religious history. Divine love, like the earthly kind, seeketh her own, and also she seeketh not her own. Worship bears the impress of appropriating love, as the worshipper seeks to draw near to God, and to enjoy some measure of union and communion with Him. This love could be selfishly exclusive—as in the demand for a God who confines His favours to a particular nation, or shows Himself a respecter of persons; and when the horizon and the sympathies were widened, the religious heart continued to feel that the Lord could be claimed as 'my God'—a God who cares for the worshipper as much as if He had only one in the world to care for, and who pledges to him as the token of His reciprocal love the resources of infinite power and wisdom. Nor has love forgotten, when it was touched with piety, that it is its vocation to bless as well as its prerogative to be blessed. Ever since man found a God that he could love, he has asked himself what he might do as a fit expression of his devotion. When it was believed that divine beings had much the same wants as human beings, it was not unusual to show affection by providing them with food, raiment and shelter; and when God was known to be the author and the dispenser of all blessings, and so in need of nothing, it was still felt that gifts or services should be offered which had the

use and the grace of the love-token. Man holds stiffly by his possessions; and when it appears that at one time or another he has been willing to make a surrender of everything to his God—his stuff and his gold, his health, his ease, his liberty, his nearest and dearest, yea and his own life also, we may well marvel at the strength of the motives which have been able thus to bind the strong man, and to spoil him of his goods. And while there have been other and more constant motives, it is obvious that some of the most impressive of the sacrifices have shown the signs of love's handiwork. If on a general view of the facts of history and experience religion has been most conspicuously a venture of faith and expectation, it has also had as one of its aspects the aspiration of the human heart after communion with a God worthy of love. The religious life of the race might even be described as the thread of divine romance which runs through the long-drawn acts and the crowded scenes of the drama of human history; and though the secular historian naturally discovers the central movement in the progress of civilisation and the development of political institutions, it is not incredible that, in the intention of the divine author of the strange, eventful piece, the fundamental and unifying theme has been the history of man's quest of God, and of God's quest of the love, the trust and the obedience of man.

The sentiment of divine love has varied widely in the different religious systems, and especially at the different levels of spiritual experience. At the natural standpoint, represented by man as man and by the national community, the sentiment is weak; it has been prominent in the world of the disciples and converts; and it has perhaps been the most marked and constant feature of the piety of the saints. We

proceed to examine it at the three principal stages of spiritual development which may be distinguished as the natural level, the regenerate level, and the saintly level.

## II

Religion, as was observed, has had a place among the interests of man as man and of the natural community. And, as we have seen, the point of view of these subjects has been essentially practical—the test of a religion being its profitableness. Nevertheless both have shown that sacred objects had an independent hold on their affections, and have made some response in the forms that are habitual to love.

Man as man, it is generally recognised, has some capacity for disinterested love which forms a pleasing foil to the general tenor of his behaviour. 'While in normal individuals,' writes Mr. Shand, 'the great principle of self-love or the self-regarding sentiment is generally pre-eminent, this is joined in subtle and intimate ways with a variety of disinterested sentiments: as conjugal and parental love, filial affection, friendship, the sentiment for some game or sport, and in the higher characters one or other of the great impersonal sentiments, patriotism and the love for some science or art.'[1] Regard for self-interest is the badge of human behaviour, but it is nevertheless found to be accompanied by a strain of disinterested affection in all human relationships, and even in lower spheres. The relations of man with the lower animals might be taken as the extreme example of the ruthless pursuit of private ends in disregard of the interests of other beings, and yet it is undeniable

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

that man has kindly feelings towards the creatures, and that there are men and women who find an engrossing mission in the prevention of cruelty to animals. And it would be indeed surprising if man, whose family life is based on affection, who can be unselfish in friendship, can develop into an ardent patriot, and can even show genuine attachment to the animals which he hunts and enslaves and feeds for the slaughter, should be unable to think of aught but himself and his interests when he has to do with the Supreme Being. Mr. Shand does not include the love of God and divine things in his list of the disinterested sentiments, but this may have been an accidental omission from a list which was intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive. At any rate it would be as absurd as it would be uncharitable—if we may illustrate from the above list—to credit some disinterestedness to the multitude which gathers at the race meeting or the football field, and to deny it to the companies which flock to the place where prayer is wont to be made, and which on occasion join in the song :

> I joy'd when to the house of God,
> Go up, they said to me.

Many Englishmen have been very fond of fox-hunting and of cricket, but many of 'the higher characters' have also been warmly attached to the Church of England ; and if some have ardently loved Art and Science for their own sake, so also have there been those in every generation who have loved God for His own sake.

The love of God which is met with on the natural level is largely implicit, and it is little vocal. In the affective aspect it has most in common with the

sentiment of loyalty which the good citizen feels towards his king and country, the faithful servant towards an honoured master, and the right thinking man towards his benefactor. The felt need of giving expression to this sentiment of loving loyalty has been one of the motives of the common worship: even when large deductions are made for empty formality, ceremonial religion has still the aspect of a great demonstration of devotion; and it may be said that if any earthly monarch received ovations remotely comparable to the professions of love and gratitude which are offered week by week to God and to Jesus Christ, his name would be embalmed in history as that of the best-loved king that was ever enthroned in the affections of a people. The general religious sentiment has also included an element of filial attachment, though it may perhaps be observed that the popular mind has never been greatly impressed by the idea of God as the Heavenly Father. It may be that fatherhood has been felt to be too little awe-inspiring to do justice to the majesty of the Divine Being, or else that on the average it has been too little sympathetic and friendly to be an adequate symbol of the loving-kindness of God. Of the reactions of love it is the self-affirming impulse which has been most in evidence on the natural plane. The natural man has found it easy to say, 'my God,' 'my religion,' 'my Church.' And he has also felt in some degree the impulse to show forth his love by doing something for his God. Since, however, it is a hard saying that the due response is obedience in life and deed to the holy and loving will, there has been a persistent tendency to substitute ceremonial observance and orthodox belief for this exacting service. It has to be added that there are grounds for holding that the sentiment

of divine love is more intense and more deeply rooted than appears on the surface, inasmuch as the tender emotion is normally quiescent—its vitality and strength being only revealed in extraordinary circumstances, and notably when one loses, or is threatened with the loss of, the object beloved. The husband and father may only realise in the hour of the power of death that a wife or a child was dear to him as his own soul ; a citizen may first come to know himself as a self-sacrificing patriot when his country is threatened by conquest and ruin ; and in like fashion the ordeal of persecution has shown that in some of those who seemed to be common clay there slumbered the passion and the devotion of the martyr of Heaven. And similarly a godless philosophy has revealed to some on whom their religion seemed to sit lightly that the loss of their God would be felt as the blotting out of the sun of the soul, and as the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep.

The social group of the tribe or nation has shown indubitable traces of the sentiment of divine love. This was indeed flatly denied by Augustine. The distinguishing mark of the earthly state, he says, is a self-love which passes over into contempt of God, while the mark of the celestial state is a love of God which involves contempt and suppression of self. The political society, he adds, is by nature vainglorious, it lusts after dominion and spoil, it reckons temporal goods the highest, and its thoughts of God are vain imaginations.[1] But while these observations are not groundless, we may hold with Hosea that a nation was given a heart wherewith to love God, and that whether it choose a noble or an ignoble object its service of its God has some of the characters of love. There has

[1] *De Civitate Dei*, xiv. 28.

been a good deal in national religion which is to be set down to spontaneous affection for the objects of faith, and to the pleasure in holy things which is its natural accompaniment. The nation as such took much to do in earlier times with the erection and the adornment of temples and churches—to which it lavishly contributed out of its aesthetic genius as well as from its material resources; and this work was usually carried out, not in the spirit of the contractor who tries to do things cheaply, but in the spirit of the monarch who ordains that a magnificent subject shall be magnificently treated. If the nation, like the ordinary individual, finds it hard to 'get to God' Himself, it has at least shown considerable attachment to the things which might be called the divine appurtenances—as holy places, holy seasons, and holy customs and traditions. Sometimes it has appeared that it counted holy places among the most precious things in the world, as in the medieval Crusades, when throughout two centuries the nations of Europe poured out their treasure and their blood in the desire to vindicate the honour of Christ by wresting the Holy City out of the hands of the infidel. This sentiment would appear to have weakened much in recent times, for the medieval dream was fulfilled in the course of the great war, and did not excite very much interest. The explanation, however, may rather be that there was so much else to think of, and also that it has come to be thought that love to Christ is less appropriately shown by conquering a country in His name than by subscribing money for carrying out His commands in the evangelisation of the world and the performance of the works of mercy. Nor may it be assumed that the religious passion which could once flame out in Europe has ceased to exist. The strength

of religious feeling, as was said, is not known until it is challenged, and the toleration which is the rule in civilised states has induced the quiescence of emotion that is too readily mistaken for coldness and indifference. In modern times, however, there have been two direct attacks on the faith of a nation which have put its love to a crucial test. At one stage the French Revolution was identified with the proposal to abolish Christianity; but while its principles of liberty and equality have fermented ever since in the life of the European peoples, the project of the dethronement of Christ ranks as one of the memorable historical fiascos. The challenge has been repeated in Russia in more savage form, and while the situation is obscure it is at least clear that many waters have not quenched the divine love that is native to the deep heart of the martyr-nation of Europe. And probably there is light on the political future of Russia in the text which declares that 'every one that falleth on that stone shall be broken to pieces; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust.' (Lk. xx. 18.)

III

The sentiment of divine love has been much more marked at the regenerate level of experience which, as was said, is represented in one way by the convert, and in another by the ecclesiastical community. And this love has been of various kinds which correspond to the natural forms of affection. In Old Testament piety the characteristic kind was a transfigured form of the loyalty of the devoted subject or of the faithful servant. Christianity was a gospel of divine sonship, which fostered in the disciple the spirit of filial piety

toward the reconciled God and Father. It is, however, in the form of the loving cult of a Saviour-friend that the affective type of religion has been most conspicuously developed. This has had three notable illustrations, and they are to be spoken of with reverence, for they were after the manner of the anointing by Mary of Bethany, and the world has been filled with the odour of the ointment.

1. Buddhism was made popular by summing up the requirements in loving devotion to the founder. Primitive Buddhism may be thought to have been nothing less than an outrage on the human heart, since it left man without a God to love and trust; but the heart was avenged on the system when the Buddha was rescued from annihilation, and was himself installed as the heavenly friend of the sorrow-stricken children of men.

'I do not stay away from him,' said an aged disciple, 'from Gotama of great wisdom, who taught me the Damma. I see him in my mind and with my eye, vigilant night and day. Whichever way he goes the same I am inclined. As I am worn out and feeble my body does not go there, but in my thoughts I always go there, for my mind is joined to him.' [1]

Conservative thinkers held that the person of the teacher had no place among the saving provisions of Buddhism, and that the doctrine was everything. To a devotee who expressed his longing to see and commune with the Exalted One, the Lord himself replied: 'What hast thou to do with this poor frame of mine? He that seeth the norm, he it is that seeth me.' [2] But it was as the gospel of the heavenly friend that

[1] Sutta Nipata, *S.B.E.*, x. 2.
[2] Rhys Davids, *E.R.E.*, art. 'Love.'

Buddhism came to be generally understood and lived, and it is in this form that it is preached at this day. 'Tell me,' said a Buddhist prison-chaplain to a penitent murderer, 'why you have become a Christian? Christianity is after all nothing but morals. Now Buddha receives you with love and mercy.' [1]

2. A similar development took place in Brahmanism, where it had a better theoretical justification. For in typical Hindu thinking God was the alpha and the omega; and if this be so, something of the divine reality appears in all finite things, and whatsoever is pre-eminent in beauty and excellence may be revered as a special manifestation of the Infinite. The object in which faith thus 'saw the unseeable' might be one of the ancient divinities, or a hero in whom, as in Rama and Krishna, the Supreme Being was believed to have been incarnated for a special purpose.

'Thou didst lay thy hand,' says a worshipper of Siva, 'on the foolish wanderer. The Lord, who wears on his head the cassia flower, honey-sweet, sought me out and entered my soul. In bodily form he stood before me and my soul melted. He drove away my sin and filled me with sweetness.' [2]

In the Bhagavad-Gita Krishna gives instruction in the chief articles of faith and duty, and goes on to declare that loving devotion to his own person is the fulfilling of the law. Others found in Rama the God in whom all their desire was fulfilled:

> As the bride looks back to her mother's house
> And goes, but with dragging feet,
> Even so it is with my soul, O Lord,
> That thou and I may meet.

[1] *A Gentleman in Prison*, 1923, p. 88.

[2] Quoted by Lehmann, *Textbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 1912, p. 253.

As a child cries out and is sore distressed
When its mother it cannot see,
As a fish that is taken from out the wave,
So 'tis, says Tuka, with me.[1]

3. The Christian salvation has often been concentrated into the love of Him who is at once Saviour and Friend. The craving for a divine object which shall be easily apprehensible and supremely lovable was uniquely satisfied by the vision of Jesus Christ. He was, to begin with, a real person, vouched for by those whose eyes had seen and whose hands had handled. And those who beheld the vision hastened, like the wise men of the East, to offer Him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, being drawn to Him by the threefold cord of goodness, beauty and suffering. They felt the spell of a goodness whose like the world had not seen, and of which it had scarcely dreamed until it saw it wrought out in His deeds and His sufferings. In Jesus the purity and the austerity of holiness were joined with the tenderness and compassion of one who cared not for Himself, but went about doing good, and who while loving all had a peculiar tenderness for His friends, for the little children, for the sufferers and the bereaved, for the weeping Magdalenes and the returning prodigals, and for those who in their ignorance hated Him and despitefully used Him and persecuted Him. In this goodness, further, there was the spell of beauty, and Jesus was greeted as 'the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely.' Above all, there was the magnetism of the Cross. Goodness and beauty can always reckon on a certain loving response, but chiefly the goodness that is oppressed, and the beauty that is marred by hatred and cruelty.

[1] From Tukārām's *Abhangas*, quoted by MacNicol, *E.R.E.*, art. 'Hindu Mysticism.'

And the story of the life of Christ was the unparalleled tragedy. His purpose had been to bring in a Kingdom of God in which men would love God as their Father, and one another as brethren ; love to man with love to God had been the spring of His mission and of His every deed ; and the earthly recompense was that a plot was formed to destroy Him, and that He was put to death with the worst insults and tortures as a blasphemer and a malefactor.

The Christianity which centres in the love of Jesus has been a perennial form of Christian piety. It had a prototype in the disciple who leaned on Jesus' breast at supper. It was represented by many of the Fathers, especially in the West. It was both the poetry and the piety of the contemplative life of the cloister. It was favoured by the Church as being great enough to satisfy the desires of those who sought perfection, and also simple enough to become the possession and the inspiration of the good Christians of the workaday world. It is probable that the Church came to insist on the celibacy of the clergy, not merely because the system was calculated to produce servants who would serve the institution with singleness of heart, but also because it was thought that the Christ would be more devotedly loved when there was neither wife nor child to share His claim on the treasury of the affections. Among the common people the love of Jesus was fostered by the witness of the Christian Year, and by the multiplied emblems of the Passion ; while the appeal for heavenly affection and trust was reinforced by the exaltation of the Blessed Virgin, who could be loved as belonging to the sphere of Godhead, while she was the symbol of all that motherhood has meant in a selfish and tragical world. The Middle Age had its developments which are not

unjustly described as a revival of Judaistic and pagan elements, but it also had spiritual revivals in which there was a fresh baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and the watchword of some of these movements, notably the Franciscan, was, 'Back to the love of Jesus.' One characteristic feature was the sorrowful and sympathetic contemplation of the events of the Passion. The other was the tender love which Bernard of Clairvaux expressed in the hymn that still ascends as incense from the rising to the setting of the sun :

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

The same kind of piety has also flourished richly in the soil of Protestantism. The chief figures of the Reformation, indeed, while insisting on a personal relation to Christ as a vital note of true religion, deemed the Christ of the threefold office too great to be readily treated as a bosom friend, and the chief emphasis was laid, not on love, but on faith and the service of new obedience, as the essential elements of the human response. Luther was impatient, and even scornful, of the disciple who showed his love by weeping at the Cross, and being angry with Judas and the Jews, and he declared it to be much more urgent to claim the benefits of the sacrifice for sin, and to be delivered from its power.[1] In the sub-Reformation period, and in the ensuing centuries, Christianity has tended to assume the simplified form of the love of Jesus in a variety of situations—notably in the heat of strife and persecution, under the reign of an unspiritual orthodoxy, in the quickening of a spiritual revival, and in the period of theological confusion and bewilder-

[1] *Sermon von der Betrachtung des heiligen Leidens Christi*, 1519.

ment. There were Protestants who wearied of Roman polemics and ecclesiastical politics, and whom men praised for preaching the Christ who had made them to lie down in green pastures, and who led them by the still waters. And Marion Harvey spoke for many of the martyrs, when she was led to execution from the Tolbooth : ' I hear the voice of my Beloved saying unto me, " Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." ' When Lutheran religion had run to a pugnacious and barren orthodoxy in the course of the seventeenth century, it was rebuked and refreshed by the spiritual revival embodied in Pietism. When in the eighteenth century English Protestantism had fallen to its lowest ebb, John Wesley stirred afresh the religious heart of his people. And in each case the core of the invitation was to accept Christ and to live with Him as the Saviour-friend. When Wesley visited Moravia he collected testimonies of the kind which were after his own heart. One may be quoted as typical for both schools of piety :

' On Sunday,' said Zacharias Neisser, ' I went to church, and while we were singing these words, " Wir glauben auch an Jesu Christ," I clearly saw Him as my Saviour. I wanted immediately to be alone, and to pour out my heart before Him. My soul was filled with thankfulness, and I had a full assurance that my Beloved was mine and I was His, which has continued to this day. I see by a clearer light what is pleasing to Him, and I do it continually in love. I receive from Him daily peace and joy, and I have nothing to do but praise Him.' [1]

The Evangelical party in the Church of England laid the same stress on the realisation of the presence of Jesus, and the cultivation of the heavenly friendship. The best known of its spokesmen was Cowper's

[1] *The Journal of John Wesley*, 1909, ii. p. 43.

friend, the curate of Olney, 'John Newton, clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, who was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned and appointed to preach the faith he had long laboured to destroy.' The Evangelical was the trustee of the theology of the Reformation, and he could be much in polemics against the Papacy. But Newton wrote a hymn which is placed beside St. Bernard's:

> How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
> In a believer's ear!
> It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
> And drives away his fear.

In more recent developments there has been a widespread tendency to commend Christianity in the form of loving attachment to Jesus. Modern evangelicalism does not feel entirely comfortable with the traditional scheme of doctrines, but it has still been very sure of its ground in its appeal to trust Jesus and to live in loving communion with the glorified Lord, and it has found that a large response has continued to be made to this appeal. It has also seemed to many that the best way of approach to a world lying in unbelief and half-belief was to declare that Christ is Himself the substance of the gospel, and to claim for Him the reverence and the hero-worship which the human heart is ready to accord to the greatest—and this with the hope that those who, like Thomas, company with Him and follow Him will end like the apostle by confessing, 'My Lord and my God!' Nor may it be doubted that the type of piety which clings to Jesus as the Saviour-friend is still a very important element in the life of the Protestant Church and of the typical congregation. It may have been declining—for there has been a reaction against sentiment of

all kinds, and in any case a growing dislike to appear sentimental. But this sentiment is still very articulate. It is vocal with one manner of speech at a tumultuous revival meeting, and with another at a gracious Keswick Convention. And there are also many in wider circles who love and are silent. As St. Bernard said, it is their secret.

## IV

The sentiment of divine love, which is at least implicit in the inferior religious subjects, and which has deeply coloured the piety of the religious community, has been the most conspicuous of the distinguishing marks of sainthood. Especially is this true of the Mystics narrowly so-called. 'Le Mysticisme,' says Joly, 'c'est l'amour de Dieu.' For the neo-Platonist the saint was 'a spirit in love.' 'In Mystical Theology,' says St. Francis de Sales, 'the soul holds loving converse with God in His loving-kindness to the end that it may unite itself with Him.' [1]

The experience of the saints has exemplified in striking forms what we have called the pattern of love. The tenderness and the zeal have had the strength of a grand passion. And the sacred passion has combined in the most intense form the interested and the disinterested impulses of love. 'The two spirits,' says John of Ruysbroeck, 'our own spirit and the spirit of God, yearn each for the other in love. Each demands of the other all that it is, and each offers to the other all that it is, and invites to all that it is. These two, God's grasp and His gift, our craving and our giving back, these fulfil love.' [2] It has boldly

[1] *Traité de l'Amour de Dieu*, iv. 1. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

pressed its claim to possess its object, and laid upon it its annexing grasp. But not less has it revealed itself in its self-surrendering and self-divesting aspiration. 'That which is best,' says the *Theologia Germanica*, 'should be the dearest of all things to us; and in our love to it neither helpfulness nor unhelpfulness, advantage nor injury, gain nor loss, honour nor dishonour, praise nor blame, nor anything of the kind should be regarded, but what is in truth the noblest and the best of all things, and that for no other cause than that it is the noblest and the best.'[1] The saints have vied with one another in protestations that, though their love might be enriched by gratitude, it was not purchased by favours or dependent on promises. They could cleave to God when He hid His face from them; they could welcome every form of calamity and suffering as putting them to the proof, and making them more worthy of Him who first loved them; they declared that God was Heaven, and Heaven was God, and some were very bold and said that they would love and praise Him even in Hell. The climax of this self-renunciation has been found in the declaration of Spinoza, that 'whoso loves God must not desire God to love him in return,' but this striking development, sublime as it sounds, represents the suicide rather than the fulfilment of love. One type of saintly love has been akin to the sentiment of loyalty, another to filial affection, another to the tenderness of friendship, another to the romantic love of man and woman; while each type has differed from the earthly parallel by the difference which was made by the feeling that the object which had a place in the heart as king, father, friend or woman beloved was also to be adored

[1] (Eng. tr.), 1854, chap. vi.

as divine. And the zeal of this love has expressed itself in very emphatic and impressive fashion. The literature in which the love of country has been voiced by the patriot, of the friend by the friend, and of the father by the son is found to be meagre and unimpressive in comparison with that in which the saints have confessed the love which they bore to the Divine Being, and testified to the joys and the pangs which it brought in its train. The only earthly sentiment which has been more conscious of itself, and which has obtained in a fuller degree the satisfaction of self-expression in great literature, is the romantic love of the sexes.

A full treatment of the love of the saints embraces these topics :—the different aspects or characters in which the Divine Being has been loved ; the kinds of divine love ; the reasons of love ; the rise, progress, and fulfilment of divine love after its chief kinds ; the methods of confirming and advancing the loving relationship ; the aspirations and satisfactions of appropriating love ; the manifold workings of the communicating impulse in the forms of self-surrender and disinterested service. To some of these heads a large contribution of fresh or neglected material has been made by modern research—notably in the series of erudite and masterly studies of Mysticism.[1] For the present purpose it will be sufficient to refer to the chief forms which divine love has assumed in the different theological settings.

[1] The most important of this remarkable series are :—W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 1899 ; *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, 1923 ; Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 1908 ; von Hügel, *The Mystical Element of Religion*, 1908 ; Delacroix, *Études d'histoire et de psychologie du Mysticisme*, 1908 ; Evelyn Underhill, *The Mystical Element of Religion*, 1908, and other studies ; Oman, *Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India*, 1903.

1. The pantheistic saint has loved God fervently. The average human being finds it impossible to love an impersonal being without moral qualities, but for the saint this creed was compatible with the ecstasy of love. 'As a man,' said the Hindu, 'when embraced by a beloved wife, knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within, thus this person (the emancipated) when embraced by the intelligent Self (God) knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within.'[1] Plotinus describes the ecstasy in similar terms: 'It is that union of which the union of earthly lovers, who wish to blend their being with one another, was a copy.'[2] The sister-parable which was used to set forth the bliss of the union was the power of the 'wine which maketh glad the heart of man.' 'The spirit in love,' said Plotinus, 'is inebriated with nectar, in simple contentment and satisfaction; and it is better for it to be so intoxicated than to be too proud for such intoxication.' And there have been two kinds of love corresponding to the gnostic and the agnostic forms of the pantheistic creed. When the object has been the Unknowable, the love has had the character of the fascinated or spell-bound love. There was an experience of a power that apprehended and overwhelmed rather than of a beauty and a goodness which attracted —an experience akin to the feelings of the wild animals in presence of man, and to the infatuation and the fatal passion which the Greeks explained as wrought by a certain demoniac energy. The spirit of the fascinated love in which there can be little joy, and yet great strength of passion, may be recognised in passages like this from the Upanishads:—'That Brahman is a great terror, like a drawn sword; from terror of Brahman fire burns, from terror the

[1] Brih. Upanishad, iv. 3, 21.

[2] *Ennead*, vi. 7, 34.

sun burns, from terror Indra and Vayu, and Death, as the fifth, run away.' The love of the pantheistic gnostic, on the other hand, has commonly had the rapturous note of the intoxicated love. It was felt by Spinoza, for whom love of God was the abounding joy of him who sees all things in the light of God and of Eternity. A testimony which gives expression to the tumult of the inebriated soul may be quoted from a Sufi poet:

> He comes, a moon whose like the sky ne'er saw awake or dreaming,
> Crowned with eternal flame no flood can lay.
> Lo, from the flagon of Thy love, O Lord, my soul is swimming,
> And ruined all my body's house of clay.
>
> When first the giver of the grape my lonely soul befriended,
> Wine fired my bosom and my veins filled up,
> But when His image all mine eye possessed, a voice descended,
> Well done, O sovereign wine and peerless cup.[1]

The Pantheistic School had a code of rules for the attainment of the desired union with God. There were two principal methods—the ethical method of purification, and the intellectual method of abstraction. The ethical way was that a man should be virtuous, that he should transcend commonplace virtue by complete detachment from worldly aims, and that self-sacrifice should be made perfect in self-mortification. The intellectual demand was that the mind should be abstracted from all finite things and concentrated on God as the one reality. In the use of these means some had experience of the raptures of love, but doubtless also many were disappointed,

[1] Quoted by Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 1914, p. 106.

and so certain alternative or supplementary methods were essayed. Gautama had been one of the disillusioned, and so he bade his disciples to be content with Nirvana in place of God, and to attain it by the practice of self-denying virtue. A less respectable method, illustrated by the Yoga practice, was to take steps to induce a hypnotic or semi-hypnotic condition, which it was possible to interpret as the highest state of religious exaltation.[1] In the Bhagavad-Gita the chief prominence is given to the ethical and the intellectual rules, but great importance is also attached to the bodily exercises :

> A devotee should constantly devote himself to abstraction, remaining in a secret place, alone, with his mind and self restrained, without expectations and without belongings. Fixing his seat firmly in a clean place, not too high nor too low, and covered over with a sheet of cloth, a deerskin, and blades of grass, and being seated, fixing his mind exclusively on one point, with the working of the mind and of the senses restrained, he should practise devotion for purity of self. Holding his body, head, and neck even and uncovered, remaining steady, looking at the tip of his own nose, and not looking about in all directions, with a tranquil self, devoid of fear, he should restrain his mind and (concentrate it) on me, and sit down engaged in devotion, regarding me as his final goal. Thus he attains tranquillity culminating in final emancipation and assimilation with me.[2]

It is easy to be cynical about the seeker who proposed to himself the mystical union with God, found that he could not attain to it by meditation and prayer, and supposed that he had succeeded when he managed to hypnotise himself. But one may rather feel the deep pathos of it. And after all it remains a possibility that the God who giveth to His beloved

[1] Garbe, art. 'Yoga' in *E.R.E.* [2] vi. 18.

in sleep could make some gifts in the Yoga-trance to them who sought Him therein with a pure and a sincere heart.

2. The theistic type of divine love has its classic expression in the Old Testament literature, and its chief notes were also reproduced in the orthodox Mohammedan School. Deuteronomy, though it combined the prophetic inspiration with sacerdotal interests, put in the forefront the commandment to love the Lord as well as to serve Him with all the heart and all the soul (x. 12). The God of the prophets was, however, too majestic and awe-inspiring to be confidently approached in the character of the friend, the lover or the spouse. The friendship of the Almighty was supposed to have been the peculiar privilege of the two greatest figures of the distant past—Abraham, who was called the friend of God, and Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. For Hosea, God was the husband and Israel the faithless wife, but no prophet was so presumptuous as to call the individual soul by the name of the wooer or the bride of God. The love of the Old Testament saints had an element of filial affection which can be detected in the words of the Psalmist : ' Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him ' (ciii. 13) ; but as the essence of filial piety was held to be to honour father and mother, doubtless the sense of divine sonship also carried with it more of reverence than of tenderness. The prophetic love of God was most distinctively the loyalty of the devoted subject, raised to the highest degree in contemplation of the glorious perfections and of the mighty works of the King of kings. And to such a pitch was it raised that it could approach the fascinated or the inebriated love. But the prophets of the golden and the silver ages set

no great store on the ecstatic tumult of the soul. Nor does it appear that the mystical union was sought as an end in itself.

3. The Christian Church has been hospitable to many kinds of divine love. Christianity is a monotheistic religion which is also the religion of the Incarnation; and it has been open to the Christian mind to fasten its attention either on the God who was revealed in Christ or on the Christ in whom God was revealed. There have accordingly been two principal kinds of divine love, which may be distinguished as the theocentric and the Christocentric. Naturally the theocentric kind has as a rule been theistic, but there has also been a pantheistic type represented by some of the most celebrated of the mystics. The divine object, again, whether it was conceived in theistic or in pantheistic modes of thought, or as incarnate God, could be loved in the various characters which have their earthly counterparts in the king, the master, the father, the friend, the lover and the spouse.

(*a*) The pantheistic type of Christian mysticism has excited extraordinary interest—partly because of the sensational combination of Christian sainthood with a pagan philosophy, partly because of the strength of the passion by which it has been accompanied, and partly also because of its rarity. In the school of Christian Pantheism, as in Hinduism, there have been two varieties of divine love corresponding to the agnostic and the gnostic types of Monism. The agnostic type was represented by the pseudo-Dionysius, for whom God was finally the abyss, the darkness, the wilderness, the Being beyond being. In the teaching of the Areopagite the chief stress was laid on the method of intellectual abstraction, and as he explains it we

recognise the spell-bound love of the fascinated soul :

> And thou, dear Timothy, in thy intent practice of the mystical contemplations, leave behind both thy senses and thy intellectual operations, and all things known by sense and intellect, and all things which are not and which are, and set thyself, as far as may be, to unite thyself in unknowing with Him who is above all being and all knowledge, for by being purely free and absolute, out of self and of all things, thou shalt be led up to the ray of the divine darkness, stripped of all, and loosed from all.[1]

The gnostic form of Pantheism, and the intoxicated love which accompanies it, may be represented by the *Reden* of Schleiermacher, who after worshipping with the Moravians had passed through the school of Spinoza :

> 'I cannot describe the experience,' he writes, 'and can only say that it is transient as the fragrance which the dew breathes upon flower and fruit ; that it is modest and tender as the virgin's kiss, and holy and fruitful as the conjugal embrace. And it is not only like this, but it is all this. For it is the conjunction of the universal with a particular life, and is outside of time and intangible ; it is the sacred nuptials of the universe with incarnate reason to the end that they may be joined together in a creative embrace. Thou liest on the bosom of the Infinite, in that moment thou art its soul, for thou feelest all its powers and its endless life to be thine own ; in that moment it is thy body, and thou penetratest its muscles and its members as if they were thine own, while its inmost nerves vibrate to thy thoughts and aspiration.' [2]

(*b*) The Christian saint has, of course, usually been a theist ; and usually his love was theocentric—passing beyond the God-man to the Godhead. And this

[1] *Mystical Theology*, i.

[2] *Reden*, ii.

theocentric love has been of two main forms, differing considerably in content and aim, which may be called the evangelical and the mystical.

The evangelical form is represented by a succession of the Fathers and the Scholastics, and by the great personalities of the Reformation. Its chief notes were gratitude and humility—gratitude, because of the great salvation which had its source in God's loving will, and for the great sacrifice by which it was purchased; humility, because of the sense of the tremendous gulf between the creature and the Creator. There could be much of the filial affection of those who have received the adoption of sons, but there was more of the gratitude of the redeemed soul, combined with the reverential loyalty which the Old Testament prophet had felt as the subject and the servant of the heavenly king. The love that is the soul of loyalty was specially distinctive of the piety of Calvin. If he loved God, his was a love which on the affective side was primarily reverence and godly fear. In his definition of piety, reverence for God has pride of place over love to God.[1] He did not profess that his love towards the Almighty was of the nature of tender emotion: could this be fitting in a worm of the dust, when the very Cherubim in fear veil their faces with their wings? Calvin had religious passion enough, but it was chiefly a passion for glorifying the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and of seeing to it that His will was done on earth even as it is in Heaven.[2] For the cultivation of the loving relationship the Reformed School deemed the ordinary means of grace sufficient, provided these were conjoined with the practice of self-denial. The modification of the mystical rules of detachment

[1] *Institutio*, ii. 2, 1; i. 1, 3. [2] iii. 16.

and abstraction may be illustrated from Jeremy Taylor:

Although the consideration of the divine excellences and mercies be infinitely sufficient to produce in us love to God (who is invisible, and yet not distant from us, but we feel Him in His blessings, He dwells in our hearts by faith, we feed on Him in the sacrament, and are made all one with Him in the incarnation and glorification of Jesus); yet, that we may the better enkindle and increase our love to God, the following advices are not useless: (1) Cut off all earthly and sensual loves; (2) Lay fetters upon the imaginative and fantastic part, because our fancy is usually pleased with the entertainment of shows and gauds; (3) Remove solicitude or worldly cares, and multitudes of secular businesses; (4) Do not only choose the things of God, but secure your inclinations and aptnesses for God and for religion; (5) Converse with God by frequent prayer; (6) Consider the immensity and vastness of the divine love to us in creation and conservation, and especially in giving His Son, in forgiving our sins, and in adopting us to glory. In the use of these instruments love will grow in several knots and slips, like the sugar-canes in India, according to a thousand varieties in the persons loving.[1]

The love of the mystical saint made a bolder venture. The impulse of love is to possess God in some real way, and the mystic aspired to possess Him in the most intimate and complete way. One degree of possession is to know God, a higher degree is to be able to call Him 'my God' in particular relations—as the God of Providence or of Redemption; a third is to be visited and influenced by the living God; and the highest conceivable is for a human being so to appropriate God as to become himself divine. And the desire of the mystic was so to apprehend God, or to be apprehended of Him, that he should only exist, at least in

[1] *The Love of God*: Works, 1822, iv. pp. 197 ff.

his periods of rapt experience, as a mode of the existence of the Infinite Being. Self-affirmation could surely no further go than to aspire to be deified, self-abnegation no further than to become nothing, and this may be counted the supreme illustration of the paradox of love. If the evangelical saint sought to be at one with God, to the end that he might be pardoned and sanctified, the mystic rather valued forgiveness and sanctification as the conditions of being united to God. The method, as in the Oriental schools, was that the mind was emptied, and the heart purified. The intellectual requirement was the abstraction of the mind from impressions, images and even ideas. 'God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth,' says Albertus Magnus—that is to say, by a mind which has been stripped of all phantasmata. 'Enter into thy closet, and shut-to the door—that is, close the door of the senses; and when all things have been shut off, then present thy desires, but silently, to the Lord thy God.'[1] A statement of the recognised rules, in which special emphasis is laid on the moral purification, may be quoted from the *Theologia Germanica*:

> Now be assured that no one can be enlightened unless he be first cleansed, and purified and stripped. So also no one can be united with God unless he be first enlightened. Thus there are three stages: first, the purification; secondly, the enlightening; thirdly, the union. The purification concerneth those who are beginning or repenting, and is brought to pass in a threefold wise: by contrition and sorrow for sin, by full confession, by hearty amendment. The enlightenment belongeth to such as are growing, and also taketh place in three ways: to wit, by the eschewal of sin, by the practice of virtue and good works, and by the willing endur-

[1] *Liber Aureus*, ii.

ance of all manner of temptation and trials. The union belongeth to such as are perfect, and also is brought to pass in three ways, to wit, by pureness and singleness of heart, by love, and by the contemplation of God, the Creator of all things.[1]

(*c*) The Christocentric type of divine love has also assumed a variety of forms. The most celebrated is that of the mystics who clave to Him with a love passing the love of women, and whose love was crowned by union with the heavenly spouse in the bonds and the joys of the spiritual marriage. Their spiritual life was a romance with the familiar features of the terrestrial parallel—the coming of love to the soul, its source in the beauties of the object or in a mysterious affinity, the course of the true love with its obstacles and vicissitudes, the doings of the lovers, the meetings and the partings, the celebration of the nuptials, and the conjugal life of the earthly bride and the heavenly spouse. The great illustration is the experience of St. Theresa, who has given an extremely minute and vivid account of the mystical experiences. In the 'Spiritual Castle,' she distinguishes seven mansions of the soul. The sixth was described as the place of complete union and ecstasies, accompanied by the vision of the humanity of Christ, the pangs of desire, and the wounds of love, and thence the soul passed to the highest mansion in which the heavenly marriage was celebrated. Among her sister saints there have been those who described similar experiences with a larger debt to the earthly parallel. Nor was it only saintly women who thus learned Christ, and communed with Him. A heavenly love-story is worked out in detail in the *Horologium Sapientiae* of Suso—one of the most attractive of the mystical classics :

[1] Chap. xiv.

He fell in love with Christ, because of what was told in Scripture of the wisdom of God: 'She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.' For a time he wavered in his allegiance, then she appeared to him in a vision, seated on an ivory throne, placed on a pillar of cloud, in resplendent beauty, and robed in cloth of gold. Later on he had another vision, in which no bodily form was seen, and he was only conscious of the sovereign and ineffable good, the most lovable, the most beautiful and the best. And now his heart was fixed. Henceforward his spiritual exercises were wholly concerned with his heavenly spouse. Aught else of good or joy that he found in the world was to this as candlelight to the light of the sun. When he heard love lays sung, he gave them a turn to suit his beloved. She bade him enter into the sanctuary of her heart which was reserved and adorned for him. And just as a little babe, which cannot speak, as it lies on its mother's lap, smiles upon her, and nods its head, so did he show his joy at the presence of his beloved. And often with the most fervid affection, his eyes streaming with the sweet odour of love, he had clasped her to his heart.

Samuel Rutherford had less incident to relate, but his feelings were as passionate as Suso's:

I wonder that men do bide off Christ; I would esteem myself blessed if I could gather all the world that are living upon the earth, and all that shall be born to the blowing of the last trumpet, to flock round about Christ, and to stand looking, wondering, admiring and adoring His beauty and His sweetness; for His fire is hotter than any other fire, His love sweeter than common love, His beauty surpasseth all other beauty. I would not want the visitations of love, and the very breathings of Christ's mouth when He kisseth, and my Lord's delightsome smiles and love-embracements under my sufferings for Him, for a mountain of fine gold, nor for all the honours, court and grandeur of velvet kirkmen. Christ

hath the yoke and heart of my love. 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.' [1]

The discipline, as in other forms of Mysticism, laid the stress on moral purification and intellectual abstraction. St. Theresa distinguished degrees of prayer which had cumulative effects — meditation, recollection and quiet, unconscious co-operation of all the intellectual powers, and ecstasy. The ethical side of the method is picturesquely treated by St. Bernard in his description of the three stages of the approach to the Beloved. The first stage is to kiss His feet—which is the preparation of repentance; the second is to kiss His knees—the preparation of sanctification; and upon this follows the union—'let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine.' [2]

It is not surprising that much has been heard of the romantic form of the love of Christ. It has awakened the interest which, it is said, all the world feels in a lover; and the interest was heightened by the audacity of the heavenly love-suit, and by the report made of the ineffable bliss by which it was crowned. And further it is notable that the religious experience can attain a depth and intensity that is comparable with, and can even surpass, that which is associated with the most idealistic and self-submerging of the human passions. On the other hand, it is proper to emphasise that it only represents one of several forms in which the love of the saints has been cast, and that while it is undoubtedly the most sensational it is another question whether it is the most beautiful and the most seemly. The saintly experience which represents the love of the Saviour-friend at its

[1] *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, 1867 : Letter ii.
[2] *Sermons on the Canticles.*

highest, has been much commoner; and it may well be thought that this has been more beautiful as well as more becoming. The Christ of Christian faith, moreover, is prophet, priest and king, and for the saint who has clung to Christ as the victim-priest, and especially for the saint who has loved Him with self-obliterating loyalty as the King who has been exalted to be Head of His Church and of the nations and Lord of his individual soul, the disciple of the Reformed Church may well feel a greater respect, and claim the highest meed of honour.

We have seen, then, that divine love has played a large part as an independent principle in religious history. The only question is as to what is its worth and its utility, and as to whether it has a solid basis in the realm of objective reality.

As to worth, it may be said to begin with that the sentiment has at least some aesthetic value. If it be a mark of refinement of soul to have a feeling for the beautiful in nature, it is equally so to have a feeling for the Infinite in the finite; and if the character be enriched when new affections spring up as fruits of friendship and marriage, it cannot be less an enrichment of the inner life to give the heart to a being clothed with the ideal qualities that are counted divine.

More important is the question as to the ethical value of the love which fixes the affections on a divine object. Has it fostered, or has it displaced, the love which man owes to his fellow-man? Undoubtedly God has been loved at the expense of man. The Hindu saint who deemed the mystic union with God to be the highest blessing could be indifferent to natural obligations, and could look on the spouse,

the child, and the friend as idols. If he was permitted to love his kith and kin, it was only in the representative and apologetic way which Yagnavalkya explained to his wife when he bade her farewell :

> And he said, Verily a husband is not dear that you may love the husband, but that you may love the Self (God), therefore a husband is dear. And so with a wife, and sons and cattle, and the Brahmans, and the Kshatriyas, and the worlds, and the Devas and the creatures. Verily everything is not dear that you may love everything, but that you may love the Self, therefore everything is dear.[1]

This attitude, which has been common in the Pantheistic School, is touchingly illustrated by the incident quoted by Mr. Nicholson from the life of a Sufi saint :

> One day he had in his lap a child four years old, and chanced to give it a kiss, as is the way of fathers. The child said, 'Father, do you love me?' 'Yes,' said Fudayl. 'Do you love God?' 'Yes.' 'How many hearts have you?' 'One.' 'Then,' asked the child, 'how can you love two with one heart?' Fudayl perceived that the child's words were a divine admonition. In his zeal for God he began to beat his head and repented of his love for the child, and gave his heart wholly to God.[2]

In like sense another of the same school spoke of the heroes of Arabian romance as 'afflicted with love for human beings.'

The same general attitude is met with in some of the Christian mystics, whose love of God was cast in the moulds of the divine love-story. When Suso was wooing and being wooed by the heavenly bride, the tempter whispered that he was wasting his life in seeking what he might never find, and advised him to conjoin the

[1] Brih. Upanishad, p. iv. 5. [2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 105 ff.

love of a wife with the love of the heavenly spouse. To which Wisdom replied: 'You may have the happiness of the brutes, but at the price of sinking to the level of the brutes. And who may compare the delights? A little balsam is more precious than much vinegar. Nor may a second spouse be intruded into the heavenly union: how shall the divine love be associated with an earthly love?' [1]

St. Theresa feared lest in loving others much she should offend against God, and thought it wrong to set store on their affection for herself:

'Those persons who are favoured of God,' she says, 'do not attach themselves to others by the love which captivates and enchains, because it seems to them that this would be to love a thing of nothing and to embrace a shadow, and they could not therefore without blushing tell God that they love Him. Though in the first instance nature makes them rejoice at seeing that they are the object of love, on recollecting themselves they recognise that this is folly, except so far as those are concerned who can contribute to their salvation by their prayers or their doctrine. All affections weary and bore them because they know that they can profit them nothing, and that they might do them harm. They recognise this affection only to the extent that they pray God to bless them.' [2]

But if a certain amount of energy has been diverted from social service out of fear of the jealousy of God, there has been compensation in the gentlenesswhich has been a by-product of Oriental piety, and especially in the practice of the works of mercy which for Christian sainthood has been vital in the following of Christ. It would be difficult to overstate the difference which was made for a suffering and sorrow-stricken world

[1] *Horologium Sapientiae*, Lib. i.
[2] *Le Chemin de la Perfection*, chap. vi.

by the constraint that was laid on the Christian saint by these words of Jesus : ' I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took Me in : naked, and ye clothed Me : I was sick, and ye visited Me : I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me ' (Matt. xxv. 35-40).

Pietism—and by implication its British equivalents of Evangelicalism and Methodism—has been rudely handled by Ritschl.[1] His chief strictures were that it is Roman Catholic rather than Protestant—' the sentimental intercourse with the Risen Lord ' being a survival of the spiritual exercises of the cloister, and the Puritanical rigour in the matter of the pleasures of this world an emasculated version of monkish asceticism ; while he also held that Pietism has disintegrated Church life, and that it is chiefly responsible, by reason of its sentimentality, its narrow-mindedness and its Pharisaic self-complacency, for the religious and ecclesiastical indifference of the virile and modern elements of the Protestant nations. And in these strictures there is undeniably some substance. The pietistic experience has been unduly exalted as normative. The son who has only a sober sense of filial duty is not in the Christian Church on sufferance, or to be despised because he has not the feelings which are expressed in the sentimental hymns. It is also true that there is a type of Pietism which has overlooked the Pauline principle that every creature of God is good, and that the Christian has a title to all things. On the other hand, it must be said that the experience is one which Ritschl was not entitled to disparage because his own piety happened

[1] *Geschichte des Pietismus*, 1880-6.

to be a very prosaic form of the love of trust and loyalty. The opinion of an outsider about it, as St. Bernard said, is of no value. Moreover to call Pietism a Roman Catholic survival was unfair, as its typical experience is on the lines of the testimonies of St. Paul and of the Johannine promises ; and in any case, it might be thought matter for rejoicing rather than reproach that militant Protestants and Roman Catholics have found that they could be at one in loving Jesus. But perhaps the most striking feature of this sentimental school is the way in which the love of Christ has been manifested to the world as the inspiration of the loving service of man. In the Middle Ages it was the religious Orders whose badge was love of the Crucified that had compassion on the multitude, and laboured abundantly in the works both of the Evangelist and of the Good Samaritan. And this has been repeated on a larger scale in Protestant times. For the love of Christ, as fostered in the Evangelical School, has been the chief motive of the colossal missionary enterprise which has carried the Christian gospel to the farthest and darkest corners of the earth, while it has also been the spring of an ethical inspiration that has brought into existence examples of every institution and agency that could be devised to help to enlighten the darkness and to alleviate the miseries of the children of men.

On a view of the whole of the phenomena it may be somewhat confidently maintained that we have to do here with a manifestation of the contact of the human spirit with the realm of reality, and of the interaction of life with life. From the scientific point of view the facts—so far as they are recognised at all—have been interpreted as reactions of the human soul with a

semblance of love to a vision of historical or legendary figures, or to the personification of some particular or comprehensive ideal. But in view of the strength, the persistency and the variety of the feeling—a feeling which has been bound up with the conviction that the object is the very type of the real—there are good grounds for holding that, no less than patriotism and friendship and the other forms of human love, divine love has had for its basis and support an object which belongs to the realm of living actuality, and which similarly attests its existence in a sense of communion, and in an experience of vital and vitalising energies. The ecstatic experiences of the saints have been connected by Professor Leuba with the sexual passion, and have been diagnosed as a sublimation of the natural impulses and affections which had been repressed in the ascetic and celibate life.[1] But the mystics were not all celibates, and there have been multitudes of celibate persons who did not give a thought to the attractions of a divine love. Ascetic conditions could at most have the influence of a hothouse, and the hothouse develops only the seeds and the plants which are given it, and does not attempt to promote spontaneous generation. 'The mystic's exaltation,' it has been well said, 'sweeps up into its own current whatever in the thousandfold alternate swingings of human nature moves in its own direction, not as their product, but as their master.'[2]

It may be objected that divine love does not imply an objective basis, seeing that similar experiences occur in all the higher religions, and it is generally agreed that some are illusory. Brahma has been loved as passionately as the God of Moses and of the

[1] *Revue philosophique*, 1902, ii., and 1904, i.

[2] Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, 1912, p. 577.

prophets, the Buddhist cleaves to Buddha even as the Christian clings to his glorified Lord; and as in one case the experience is set down to hallucination, it may be thought that illusion sufficiently accounts for both. There is, however, another possibility, and that is that all love which was sincerely offered to the Divine Being found its object and established communion with Him in some degree. In the human relationships which are analogous to the religious relationship love has a nearer and a more distant reference. It has an individual object, but it also has a reference, and owes much of its intensity, to the ideal that the individual represents. In the romantic love of the sexes there is more than the love of one person for another: it is in large measure love of the ideal of manhood or of womanhood of which the concrete person is a real, though it may be a very imperfect, manifestation. And in like manner we may conceive that while that which devout souls have loved in their religion may have been primarily some very inadequate object or objects that were proposed to them by the tradition and custom of their people, they have along with this addressed their tribute of love to the Divine Being, of which the object was the symbol and the manifestation. And when they have consciously found the Highest they might say that it was not all illusion, but rather, as the poet wrote of her who crowned his earthly quest:

> if ever any beauty I did see,
> Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.[1]

[1] Donne, *Poems*, 1912, i. 7.

# CHAPTER IX

## RELIGION AS LIGHT

It has been a natural opinion in the learned world that religion is to be reckoned among the activities and the products of the intellectual life. Its deepest intention, it has been thought, is to dispel the darkness that broods over man and his universe, and to furnish a working solution of the great insistent problems. With this was usually associated the thesis that the origin of religion was an intellectual achievement—that in the exercise of his rational powers man arrived at the conviction of the existence of a Divine Being, and then proceeded to make applications of the truth by engaging in worship. This interpretation received some encouragement from Protestant Theology, which defined religion as the knowledge and worship of God, and also from the eighteenth-century Rationalism, which taught that the ideas of God, duty and immortality are known by the light of nature, and form a substratum of truth that underlies the pagan superstitions and the ecclesiastical dogmas. Hegel emphasised still more strongly the theoretical aspect of religious endeavour. 'The object of religion,' he says, 'is the same as that of philosophy—eternal truth in its objectivity, God and nothing but God and the explication of God.'[1] The two, it was said, had cast their thoughts in different moulds, and they addressed different audiences, but they dealt with the

[1] *Philosophie der Religion*, ed. Bolland, 1907, Bd. i. p. 17.

same subject-matter, and they had reached essentially the same conclusions as to the nature of God and the relations of God and man. The same view of the intention of religion was held by Auguste Comte—but with the difference that while Hegel declared that the main religious position has been confirmed by philosophy, Comte affirmed that it has been discredited and superseded by the scientific view of existence. 'At the theological stage,' he says, 'the human spirit directed its researches to the inmost nature of objects, to first causes and final causes; and it represented phenomena as produced by the direct and continuous activity of supernatural agents, more or less numerous, whose arbitrary intervention explains all the apparent anomalies of the universe.'[1] In his view the type of causal explanation represented by religion was suited to the childhood of the race, and it served a useful purpose as a stimulus to thought; but later on it was displaced by the metaphysical theory, which assigned the rôle of causes to abstract principles or forces, and this in its turn has yielded to the Positivist Philosophy, which is content to study phenomena and to register the uniformities that mark their occurrence. In the general discussion at the conclusion of *The Golden Bough*, Sir James Frazer gives great prominence to the theoretical contribution of religion. Like Comte, he recognises three types of thinking, but alters the scheme by prefixing a magical stage and dropping out the metaphysical.

'We shall perhaps be disposed to conclude,' he says, 'that the movement of the higher thought has on the whole been from magic through religion to science. In magic man

[1] *Cours de la Philosophie Positive*, 1880, i. p. 8.

depends on his own strength to meet the difficulties and dangers that beset him on every side. He believes in a certain established order of nature on which he can surely count, and which he can manipulate for his own ends. When he discovers his mistake, he ceases to rely on his own intelligence and his own unaided efforts, and throws himself humbly on the mercy of certain great invisible beings behind the veil of nature, to whom he now ascribes all these far-reaching powers which he once arrogated to himself. But as time goes on this explanation in its turn proves unsatisfactory. The keener minds, still pressing forward to a deeper solution of the mysteries of the universe, come to reject the religious theory of nature as inadequate, and to revert in a measure to the older standpoint of magic by postulating explicitly what in magic had only been implicitly assumed—to wit, an inflexible regularity in the order of natural events which, if desired, enables us to foresee their course with certainty and to act accordingly.'

Frazer further differs from Comte in holding that, while 'the hope of progress in the future is bound up with the progress of science, it is possible that as science has supplanted its predecessors, so it may hereafter itself be superseded by some more perfect hypothesis, perhaps by some totally different way of looking at the phenomena.'[1] The cognate thesis that primitive religion sprang from an intellectual root has also had some countenance from the Science of Religion. 'As a self-conscious and rationally-thinking being,' said Tiele in one of his early writings, 'man necessarily brings his lot and his life, all that happens to himself and to his fellow-men, into relations with causes that are outside of him, or powers that are above him.

[1] *The Golden Bough* (abridged ed.), 1923, chap. lxix. Frazer assumes that Theology has only recognised the hand of God in miracles. He ignores another hypothesis which is very important, and which I think perfect—viz., that God, while ordinarily acting through secondary causes, is nevertheless able to answer prayer and to carry out special purposes.

This was the origin of religion; for as soon as he conceived of such a power he felt the practical need of placing himself in relations with it.'[1]

The intellectual theory has been attacked from very different quarters, and it has now fallen into general disrepute. It was rejected by Hume on psychological and historical grounds, and by Schleiermacher in the name of piety. And the verdict of the Science of Religion has been cast against it with ever-growing emphasis. In his later writings Tiele laid the greatest stress on the practical intention of religion; and in his general pronouncement, as we saw, Frazer gives the primacy to the practical purpose by defining religion as 'the propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life.'[2] Especially is the notion scouted that in the beginning man reasoned himself into a belief in a Divine Being.

'The theory that from the beginning religion has been a pure affair of the understanding,' says Pfleiderer, 'intellectual in intention though in the result utterly erroneous, that it had nothing to do with feeling and with practical needs and demands, no root in an imagination touched with emotion, is the most ill-founded hypothesis that has been propounded, save only that which proclaimed the idea of God to have been an arbitrary invention.'[3]

To affirm that in his religious strivings man has been chiefly concerned to extend his knowledge, is undoubtedly to misrepresent the deepest intention of religion, and to miss the secret of its universal appeal and driving power. Its primary and characteristic

[1] 'Theol. Tijdschrift,' 1875, quoted by Rauwenhoff, *Rel. Phil.*, 1894, p. 44.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

[3] *Religionsphilosophie*, 1878, p. 320.

aim, as we have seen, is not knowing but being and well-being; and, as in other fields, the normal state of things has been that religious knowledge has been coveted and cherished as a form of power which was necessary to success in a great endeavour. But it is hardly less patent that the quest of salvation has been persistently accompanied by the desire of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. There is a theoretical impulse which is deeply rooted in human nature. The ordinary person, no doubt, chiefly values the knowledge which will bring him palpable advantage or pleasure, but he has also the disposition which, in Dr. Johnson's words, 'prompts the mind to study and inquiry rather by the uneasiness of ignorance than the hope of profit.' As curiosity can prompt commonplace people to the pursuit of 'barren knowledge' regarding the circumstances and the antecedents of their neighbours, it would have been very surprising if it had not been excited and fostered by objects which loomed upon them out of a supernatural realm with a combination of grandeur and mystery. And there has always been a class in which this natural impulse has been of unusual strength. A modern nation produces in every generation a measurable percentage of minds gifted with the tastes and the capacities out of which education evolves the scientist or the philosopher; and there is no reason to doubt that from a very early period the ancestral tribes gave birth to a similar proportion of persons who found meditation a congenial task, and who, as the modern opportunities of reading and research were not available, devoted their intellectual powers to reflection on the myths and the doctrines of a religious tradition, and made for their personal satisfaction their own contribution of criticism and speculation.

The two main positions which have been taken up by religious thinkers are that a knowledge of divine things is a condition of attaining the blessings promised in religion, and that this knowledge is itself a possession of great value. These positions have, however, been maintained with varying degrees of strength and confidence. There are in fact three estimates of the importance of religious knowledge which have followed one another as if in a cycle that was predetermined by some secret law of the spiritual world. The normal attitude in the great ages has been that, along with the utility, the independent value of religious knowledge has been affirmed. Upon this has commonly followed a second stage in which exaggerated ideas prevailed as to the importance of religious knowledge in comparison with the other contents of salvation. And to this usually succeeded the stage of depreciation in which knowledge fell from its high estate.

I

Knowledge has been held to be necessary in some degree as the presupposition or the support of each of the typical forms of religious aspiration. When the end of religion has been conceived as the attainment of a salvation, it has naturally been held to be necessary to have knowledge of man's actual condition, of the nature and the purposes of God, and especially of the means of deliverance. When the sum of religion has been construed as the discharge of duty towards God, it has seemed to be no less necessary to know the laws of God, and also the means whereby the will may be inclined to obedience and bent to resignation. Obviously also knowledge is needed to nourish love : while the human soul can be stricken with a trembling

love of the God who is unknown, or is only known by some blinding flashes of His majesty, in the ordinary course divine love is fostered and deepened by observation of the beauties and the excellences of the Divine Being, and by dwelling on the proof of His loving-kindness and tender mercy.

Under the sway of the religions of nature the conditions of the human lot are felt to be as obscure as they are perilous, and it is usually supposed that much knowledge and skill are needed for coping with the difficult situation. At the polytheistic level there are numerous deities whose claims have to be weighed and adjusted, and which have to be suitably propitiated. The ordinary man was insufficient for these things; and by an anticipation of the principle of the division of labour, it was made the business of a special class to know what might be known of the higher powers, and to master the details of the rites by which the religious relationship was established and cemented. The estimate set on the importance of the expert lore and skill is reflected in the extraordinary prestige and influence that were attained by the ancient priesthoods—notably in Egypt and in India. The stage of depreciation was reached with the rise of ethical religion. It was characteristic of the higher faiths that they gave popular currency to the essential elements of religious knowledge, and that they thus challenged the value of the sacred learning and the ritualistic skill which were the treasured monopoly of a sacerdotal caste. When the universal religions propagated a gospel which contained the sum of saving knowledge, the layman could feel that his position had been levelled up to that of the priest, and that what he had not come to know was not greatly worth knowing.

With the higher faiths the cycle began anew with a strong affirmation of the necessity of knowledge in order to salvation. Knowledge may be said to have been the watchword of Brahmanism. 'Bodies (when defiled),' said the Brahmanist, 'are purified by water, the mind is purified (from evil) thoughts by truth, the soul is freed (from worldly vanity) by sacred learning and austerities, the understanding (when unable to resolve some doubt) by knowledge.'[1] 'Knowledge releases from all sin, and destroys the root of all evil.'[2] 'As water does not cling to a lotus-leaf, so no evil deed clings to one who knows it (Brahman).'[3] Buddhism was also the religion of the enlightened. 'By the javelin of my knowledge,' said the Bhikshu, 'will I slay all my evil dispositions.'[4] And the misery in which existence is steeped was traced to ignorance as its ultimate source. In the noble truths suffering had been declared to be rooted in craving; and when the matter was probed more deeply, craving was found to be rooted in ignorance. 'Ignorance is the great folly by which this existence is prolonged, but those beings who resort to knowledge do not go to rebirth.'[5]

Knowledge, then, was essential to salvation, and the knowledge of divine things was elaborated into a system of religious Philosophy. And this gave rise to serious difficulty; for while religion was for man as man, the knowledge demanded presupposed no little intellectual labour, and also no mean intellectual power, and it was therefore found necessary to recognise degrees of knowledge and ignorance, and to promise corresponding grades of satisfaction. 'The world of men can be gained by a son only. By sacrifice the world

[1] 'The Institutes of Vishnu,' *S.B.E.*, p. 97. [2] *S.B.E.*, xxxiv. p. 3.
[3] *Ibid.*, i. 67. [4] *Ibid.*, xxxvi. p. 371. [5] *Ibid.*, x. 2, p. 134.

of the fathers, by knowledge the world of the devas is gained. The world of the devas is the best of the worlds, therefore they praise knowledge.'[1] Brahmanism, accordingly, accepted action, in the form of sacrifices and good works, from those who lacked leisure and ability for the acquisition of knowledge; and it also conceded to the ordinary man, who was unable to rise to the conception of the Infinite Being, the title to worship God in polytheistic and idolatrous forms. The doctrines of Buddhism were more level to ordinary human capacity; for it needs no great ability to grasp the message that life is a calamity, that we have brought our misery on ourselves, and that the way of escape is to cultivate self-denial, to perform one's duties, and to be kindly withal to man and beast. The depreciation of knowledge may also be thought to be exemplified in the Yoga-discipline which sought to induce an ecstatic condition in which thought was transcended. Moreover, Brahmanism ceased to be bound up with any distinctive doctrine of God: a Brahman, provided he obeyed the customs of his people, could break with the pantheistic Philosophy and choose between Atheism and Theism, could believe or disbelieve in personal immortality, and had also much latitude as to the conception he might form of the content of the chief good which was to be realised in time and eternity.

The stress laid on saving knowledge was a marked feature of Hebrew Prophecy. The instrument of the prophets was the enlightening word, and they imputed to ignorance the national backslidings and the calamities which avenged them. 'My people,' says Hosea, 'is destroyed for lack of knowledge,' and he complains that 'there is no truth nor knowledge

[1] *S.B.E.*, xv. pp. 95-6.

of God in the land' (iv. 1). In the Messianic Age, said Isaiah, 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea' (xi. 9). Jeremiah promised to the people 'shepherds which shall feed them with their knowledge' (iii. 15). The Wisdom Literature pitched the intellectual demands still higher. In the time of our Lord the Rabbinical Schools attached such value to theological learning as to declare that 'this multitude which knoweth not the law are accursed' (John vii. 49). In the history of the chosen people the process of degeneration was, however, checked by the instruction that was given in the synagogue and in its annexe of the school, and by the responsibility that was put on the head of the family for the religious education of the young. The chief evidence of a disparagement of religious knowledge is the popularity of the opinion, denounced by John the Baptist, that it was a sufficient title to God's favour to be a descendant of Abraham (Matt. iii. 9).

Christianity began with the reaffirmation of the prophetic doctrine of the necessity of saving knowledge. Faith was required as the condition of salvation, and this faith, while in essence trust in God, presupposed a knowledge of the character of God, of the conditions of salvation, and of His laws and His promises. The importance which Jesus attached to enlightenment is made clear by the fact that He made it the chief business of His ministry to preach and to teach. 'How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?'—so Paul explains his missionary zeal—'and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?' (Rom. x. 14). As in the creation of the world the first word of God was 'Let there be light,' so in the new creation His first act was 'to shine into

our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (2 Cor. iv. 6). In the Johannine writings salvation is life and light, and the gospel is the gift of life because it is first the gift of light. 'My words,' said Jesus, 'they are spirit, and they are life' (vi. 63). 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free' (viii. 32).

But while it was made clear that knowledge was essential, it remained a question as to how much knowledge was to be demanded. In the Apostolic Age the requirement was knowledge of the great facts of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. xv. 1), and of the duty of repentance and of faith towards God (Heb. vi. 1). The Apostles' Creed, which was compiled in its shorter form for the guidance of catechumens about the middle of the second century, gives a summary of the events of the life of Christ in a framework of elementary doctrine. In the succeeding centuries controversy deepened the sense of the importance of the doctrinal system, and saving knowledge was declared to embrace the Catholic dogmas as these had been defined by the Councils in opposition to the heretical schools. 'Whosoever will be saved,' so the finding was expressed in the Athanasian Creed, 'before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith, which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.' The Creed then goes on to an exposition, with some debt to Augustine, of the Nicene dogma of the Trinity, and to a recapitulation of the heads of the Chalcedonian dogma of the Person of Christ. And to hold the Catholic faith, naturally meant to know and understand it. But when this position was reached it became necessary to adopt an auxiliary theory out of regard to the facts of

the ecclesiastical situation. For it was obviously absurd to expect the illiterate masses of the Middle Ages to hold the theological doctrines of the Creeds in a sense that could be credibly described as knowledge—and the more so since there was not a staff of teachers able to impart this instruction. And on the other hand the Church was responsible for the souls of the ignorant people, and comforted them with the assurance of their title to the mercy of God and with the hope of eternal salvation. The difficulty was overcome by the theory of implicit faith, which was reckoned to the faithful member of the Church as a kind of vicarious knowledge. It is true that the responsible teachers demanded an explicit faith of considerable compass. According to Thomas Aquinas there must be knowledge of the primary articles. 'As regards other matters of belief,' he says, 'a man is only required to believe implicitly, or by mental preparation, in so far that he is required to believe what Scripture teaches.'[1] But in practice it came to be thought sufficient to be willing to believe what the Church taught, and docility was thus accepted as the substitute for knowledge. The situation was further relieved by the development of the sacramental system under which the temporal and eternal blessings of the Christian salvation could be appropriated without any co-operation from the instructed and thinking mind.

A similar course has been run in Protestantism, and the same difficulty has emerged. The Reformers set themselves to reinstate knowledge properly so-called as a condition of salvation. They taught that salvation is by faith, and that faith is essentially trust, but they also held that it had an intellectual content, and they insisted on full acquaintance with the presupposi-

[1] *Summa*, ii. 2, 5.

tions and the provisions of the gospel. 'The Scholastics,' says Calvin, 'invented an implicit faith, as they called it, which was nothing but a decorative name for the crassest ignorance. Faith is rooted, not in ignorance, but in knowledge—and that a knowledge, not merely of God but of the divine will. As if, forsooth, Scripture did not everywhere teach that intelligence has been conjoined with faith.' [1] On the other hand, the tendency was to confine the necessary knowledge within the limits of saving knowledge. In the sub-Reformation period the saving knowledge required was conceived to embrace an elaborate scheme of fundamental doctrines.

'By the fundamental doctrines,' says Turretin, 'we understand the essential dogmas of the Christian faith, belief in which is absolutely necessary for believers, and which one may not be ignorant of or deny without loss of salvation. It is agreed by all that the fundamental articles are the doctrines of inspired Holy Scripture as the one and perfect rule of faith, of God one and triune, of Christ the Redeemer and His perfect satisfaction, of sin and death as the wages of sin, of the law and its importance for salvation, of justification by faith, of grace and the necessity of good works to sanctification and the worship of God, of the Church, of the resurrection of the dead, of the last judgment and eternal life, and any other doctrines which are bound up with these.' [2]

The Lutheran theologians of the same period gave similar lists of the primary fundamental articles of which 'the distinct knowledge is so necessary for faith and salvation that it is impossible for faith to be generated and conserved in those who are ignorant of them, and also impossible for them to attain to eternal life.' [3] But the Protestant Church in its turn

[1] *Institutio*, iii. p. 3.
[2] *Institutio theologiae elencticae*, i. 2, 14. [3] Luthardt, *Dogmatik*.

found it was impossible to procure from the general body of its membership an adequate response to the high-pitched demands of the theological theory. Earnest efforts were indeed made to give effect to its convictions as to the paramount importance of doctrinal enlightenment. The reading and the preaching of the Word were given the central place in public worship, the Christian home was requisitioned along with the school as the instrument of religious instruction, and when the home proved a disappointment in this regard its services were supplemented by an elaborate organisation of Sunday Schools. In later times great efforts have been made to minister to those of weaker capacity by disseminating essential religious knowledge in the form of the tract and the story. Yet it cannot be said that the efforts have had the success of making a definite body of Christian facts and doctrines common property. This has indeed been accomplished in some sections of the Christian community. The Evangelical School expounded a theology which, besides taking possession of the class of converts, in some periods has also illuminated and impressed the general mind. The Anglo-Catholic School has a very definite doctrinal scheme which has awakened a similar response within narrower limits. The conception of Christianity as consisting in belief in God, the hope of immortality and a sense of duty—with Christ as its teacher and example—has been somewhat widely diffused since the eighteenth century in the national Churches and the larger denominations. To these have to be added the recent attempts to popularise essential Christianity in the form of the love or the following of Jesus. But while no school has laboured in vain, it appears from recent investigations that the average mind is darkened and

confused, and that the Protestant Church, which set out to make of every member a considerable theologian, has on its hands a multitude of members and adherents, including many intelligent and educated people, who have the vaguest ideas as to what Christianity requires them to believe, what it proposes to do for them, and what claim it makes upon their life.[1] The Anglican Church has adapted itself to some extent to the situation by falling back on the medieval theory of an implicit faith which is helped out by the mechanism of sacraments. In other Churches no better way has been discovered than to forget the wide gulf which exists between the rigid traditional theory and an ecclesiastical practice that has drifted to the utmost limits of latitudinarian toleration.

II

The knowledge of divine things has been sought, not merely as a condition of salvation, but also as itself a good, and as a satisfaction to the soul. It has, besides, been felt to be a part of duty to God to know what has been revealed of Him, and there are those who have even considered knowledge of God to be the chiefest part of salvation.

It is difficult to suppose that man has ever been without an impulse to seek knowledge for its own sake. It is now generally denied that the theoretical interest had anything to do with the origination of religion, but at least it had something to do with the welcome which it received after it came into existence. And it may even be thought that the possibility of reflection having been one of the roots of

[1] *The Army and Religion*, 1919.

religion has been too summarily dismissed. Since primitive man, like many of the animals, was full of curiosity, he must have felt the need of framing some conception of the meaning of the strange scene in which he found himself, and also of how he and his world and the things therein had come into being. It is usually thought convincing to say that prehistoric man had not the intellectual powers that were needed for framing an aetiological or teleological argument, but he must have been quite capable, as a child is, of inferring that some one had made the earth and the mountains, the rivers and the trees—even as he himself could build a hut and make a tool—and that some of the good and the evil happenings in his life and his surroundings were to be set down, equally with those which occurred in his relations with his fellow-men, to the activities of unseen friends and foes.

Animism was a comprehensive scheme of thought, and the desire for knowledge was undoubtedly a factor in the development of each branch of the animistic encyclopaedia. Polytheism was associated with the developing civilisations, one of whose marks was the growth of the theoretical interest, and this interest naturally extended to divine things. The attitude of the thoughtful pagan is illustrated by Bede's report of the visit of Paulinus, the Christian missionary, to the court of King Eadwine. There was a debate about the true religion, and at the outset the chief priest applied the criterion of utility. Their pagan religion, he said, was without virtue or profit; and he supported his thesis by pointing out that he had devoted himself most zealously to the service of the gods, and yet had received from his king lesser gifts and dignities than had gone to others who had made no show of piety.

The noble who followed him was no better satisfied with the religion of his fathers, but gave as the ground of his complaint that it threw no light on the whence and the whither of man, and advised that if the Christian religion brought light into the darkness it should be believed and obeyed. It was within the pale of the priesthoods that the inquiring and speculative spirit was chiefly fostered in the ages before the rise of the classical culture. The members of the sacerdotal class may be supposed to have differed as widely in intellectual taste and capacity as a body of modern clergy, and there must always have been a number who found in their sacred vocation the opportunity for the pursuit of knowledge, and to whom divine things were the most interesting of all. Of this there is evidence in the ancient cosmogonies, elaborated under religious auspices, which usually subserved the practical purpose of supporting an optimistic view of life, and annexing sanctions to existing institutions and laws, but which also had something of the exploring spirit of Philosophy. The Babylonian cosmogony shows that thousands of years before our era gifted minds were impelled to try to understand their religion better, and also to make use of it for the better comprehension of the scheme of things; and answers that are not wholly grotesque and futile were given to the same questions touching the what, the how and the why of things visible and invisible, that were to receive answers from the Metaphysics and the Sciences of a later day. But it was above all the Aryan stock in which the primitive curiosity developed into the disinterested quest of knowledge. And it was a people of the Aryan family which first clearly declared that knowledge of God was of itself a priceless possession. For the saintly philosophers of the Upanishads meditation was the highest and the

most blissful exercise of human faculty. 'The ancients who perceived the established (truth) call knowledge the highest happiness.'[1] They left the study of the objects and the laws of nature to the economic man, and took little or no interest in the events of political history, but for this neglect they had the sublime reason to render that God was the one Being worth knowing. To the acquisition of this highest knowledge they felt impelled by an inward constraint. 'That from which all things are born,' it was said, 'they desire to know. That is Brahman.'[2] 'The complete comprehension of Brahman,' it is declared, 'is the highest good of man.'[3] The knowledge of God was not merely the condition of salvation : it was itself salvation, for 'he that knows that highest Brahman, he is already Brahman.'[4] And yet in their ignorance men wandered about like beggars among unsuspected treasures that they might claim if only they knew. 'Just as he finds not the hid treasures who knows not the place, though he goes over it again and again, so do not these creatures find the world of Brahman, though they enter it every day.'[5] The same spirit asserted itself in Buddhism. Gautama, it is true, had no theology on which to meditate, and he discouraged speculation which had no bearing on conduct and destiny. But his gospel of deliverance rested on an elaborate and confident metaphysic which called for further elucidation and stimulated speculative thought, and in the later development the highest value came to be attached to the Buddhistic treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. From the *Questions of King Milinda*, it appears that it was the pride of the Arhat to solve

[1] *S.B.E.*, viii. p. 378.
[2] *S.B.E.*, xxxiv. p. 13.
[3] Mundaka-Upanishad, 3, 2-9, quoted by Deussen, p. 311.
[4] Chandaka-Upanishad, 8, 3-2.
[5] *S.B.E.*, xxiv. p. 14.

every problem that could trouble the seeker, and to repel every objection that might be propounded by the doubter and the scoffer. Even to the superficial student of the literature it is clear that the Indian mind has devoted immense and unwearied labours, and also great powers of analytical and abstract thinking, in the same fields in which the thinkers of the West found the materials with which to build their systems of Mental Science, of Metaphysics and of Dogmatic Theology. And these labours were held in the highest honour. In Europe the warrior-class formerly ranked as the highest, while in the latter days it has been overshadowed by the plutocracy ; but India clung to the ancient opinion that the Brahmanical caste, which combined learning and thinking with piety, had been placed by Heaven above both the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas. In this Indian estimate of the dignity of knowledge we reach the stage of exaggeration, and the customary reactions followed. Some of the thinkers arrived at the conclusion that nothing is known and can be known of the ultimate reality—which might be deemed the eventual apotheosis of ignorance. Many earnest souls were of opinion that to be good and to do good was a greater thing than to know the good—even to know God. And recently the opinion has gained ground in certain circles that a chapter of a scientific text-book is of more value than all the wisdom of the guru.

Christianity claimed to be a revelation which completed an earlier revelation, and it was natural that the revealed doctrine should be highly treasured—apart from the spiritual profit—because of its divine origin and its value as truth. The Hebrew prophets gloried in their message as a gift from God, and we can trace in the Old Testament a growing

appreciation of the independent value of spiritual knowledge. It would, indeed, have been strange if the Old Testament Scriptures had revealed nothing of the intellectual aspirations of the race which has made a deep mark on modern Philosophy through the speculative genius of Spinoza, and which has enriched modern Science by important contributions in every department of Natural and Social Science. The scientific ideal was perfectly familiar to the later Hebrew sages. It was illustrated by the picture of Solomon who, it was said, gave his heart to seek and search out by wisdom all things that are done under Heaven (Eccles. i. 13). The Hebrew thinker also felt the fascination of problems of origin. 'My heart was set to know, and to search out and to seek wisdom, and the reason of things' (vii. 25). It was even said, 'wisdom is the principal thing, and none of the things thou canst desire are to be compared unto her' (Prov. iv. 7; iii. 15). And naturally the highest kind of knowledge—the knowledge of God and of His ways—received the benefit of this valuation. The thinking of the Old Testament writers, it is true, was in the main apologetic. But there was also disinterested meditation on the being and the attributes of God, and in reflection on the wisdom and the word of God thoughts were uttered which were to be an important factor in the intellectual process which eventually replaced the old monotheism by the Christian doctrine of the triune God.

The teaching of the New Testament follows the same lines, and it similarly recognises, and with growing emphasis, that knowledge has a high rank among the blessings of the gospel. The discourses of Jesus, no doubt, rebuke the piety which exhausts itself in the labours of the intellect. He discouraged unprofitable curiosity; He spoke hard words of those who sat in

Moses' seat, and were called Rabbi ; and He warned the disciples against the temptation to make knowledge a substitute for living up to it. But Jesus also taught that knowledge of the Father was one of the high privileges of the Son, which He handed on to the children of the Kingdom (Matt. xi. 27). And he gave an honourable place to the scribe who hath been made a disciple to the Kingdom of Heaven, and who is ' like unto a householder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old ' (Matt. xiii. 52). St. Paul taught that man chiefly needs power, and that light is not necessarily power, but he had himself a mind which hungered for knowledge, comprehended particular objects and events in large views, and sought satisfaction in the discovery of proximate and first causes. It was not the least of his reasons for glorying in the gospel, that Christ was the wisdom of God, and had enriched him with treasures of wisdom and of knowledge ; and it was no small part of the promised bliss of Heaven, that he who now saw through a glass darkly would then see face to face, and would know even as also he was known (1 Cor. xiii. 12). In the Johannine writings knowledge is still more highly exalted. Eternal life, the supreme blessing of the gospel, is defined in terms of an intellectual good—this is life eternal, to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent (John xvii. 3). And one of the great sayings was the promise of the Spirit who would lead into all the truth (xvi. 13).

In the Christian Church the normal view has been that the revelation of God in Christ is a great theoretical possession as well as the means of salvation. But also in the history of the Church there has been a frequent clash of the intellectualist and the non-intellectual sympathies, with a recurring

oscillation between the gnostic and the anti-gnostic positions. The cycle of appreciation, exaggeration and depreciation has been twice traversed—first in the period from the Apostolic Age to the Reformation, and again in the period from the Reformation to modern times. The original attitude of the Church was that which is mirrored in the New Testament—reverent appreciation of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that came by Jesus Christ. To this succeeded the exaggeration of the patristic and the scholastic eras. A conspicuous feature of the patristic Church was the zealous and impassioned exaltation of doctrine in the long-drawn controversies. No doubt on a close examination all the great doctrinal conflicts are seen to have had a bearing on salvation, but the zeal was intensified by a sense of the inestimable value of revealed truth, and of the high privilege of labouring for the victory and the defence of the truth. This standpoint was represented in general by those of the fathers who had inherited the intellectual tradition of Greece along with the faith once delivered to the saints. They set forth Christianity as the divinely-revealed Philosophy—and this not only because the apologist could hope so to commend it to the cultured world of the time, but also because of their experience that the great salvation had fully met the needs of their minds by its sublime and illuminating doctrines. Sorely as the world needed it, Aristotle had not been able to include in his writings a treatise on religion, and they rejoiced that such a book was now in their hands, inspired by Him who is the Eternal Word and Wisdom of God. This baptism of the gospel with the Hellenic spirit is perhaps best represented by Clement of Alexandria. His favourite name for the superior Christian is the Gnostic. He deems the contemplative life the highest,

he is erudite, and even aspires to possess universal knowledge. If at any time he has leisure he applies himself to Philosophy in preference to any other recreation, looking on it as the dessert after the supper which has been provided by the Wisdom of God.[1] Righteousness and holiness are indeed conjoined with wisdom in the Christian *summum bonum*, but knowledge can on occasion be set above all else that enters into or accompanies salvation.

'For I will dare aver,' says Clement, 'that it is not because he wishes to be saved that he who devotes himself to knowledge for the sake of the divine science itself chooses knowledge. . . . Could we suppose any one proposing to the Gnostic whether he would choose the knowledge of God or everlasting salvation; and if these, which are entirely identical, were separable, he would without the least hesitation choose the knowledge of God, deeming that property of faith, which from love ascends to knowledge, desirable for its own sake.'[2]

The greatest of the Scholastics taught with Aristotle that happiness is the highest good, and that happiness is realised 'in the exercise of that part or faculty which apprehends things noble and divine, and consists in speculation or contemplation.'[3] 'Happiness,' says Thomas Aquinas, 'is nothing else than delight in the truth.'[4] The happiness which is attainable here below consists firstly and principally in contemplation; secondly, in the operations of the practical reason in the regulation of human actions and passions. The final and perfected happiness of Heaven will consist wholly in contemplation.[5] Theology, he held, was a pure Science, whose object was truth, although like other sciences it had its practical

[1] *Stromateis*, vi. 18.
[2] *Ibid.*, iv. 22.
[3] *Nicom. Ethics*, x. 7.
[4] *Summa*, i. 23, 4.
[5] *Ibid.*, iii. 4, 5.

applications. Scholasticism may be generally described as a colossal and long-sustained intellectual effort which was inspired by the belief that the God who made man in His own image had designed him to the dignity of becoming His fellow-thinker, and had invited him to the crowning task of combining all natural knowledge with that received from on high in a magnificent temple of truth. But while this position was truly imposing, it was also vulnerable, and in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it was assailed from two sides. For it could be said that the Scholastics were wrong in thinking that knowledge was the principal thing, and that if it was the principal thing their claim to possess it was dubious. The principle of the primacy of knowledge was challenged by the mystical doctrine that the highest good is a vital union with God in which the mind was emptied and darkened ; and it was likewise disputed by loving souls who were of opinion that the knowledge of doctrines and mysteries was a lesser thing than to be Christlike, and to minister to their brethren of mankind in their sins and sorrows. And doubts arose as to the value of the knowledge that had been the fruit of the intellectual travail. In his treatise, *Sic et Non*, Abelard set over against one another the contradictory opinions of the recognised authorities, Duns Scotus maintained that revelation had been given for practical guidance rather than for scientific enlightenment, and Gabriel Biel taught that what was true in Theology might be philosophical error. The two lines of criticism were combined by the Reformers. The notion that the contemplative life is the highest, it was held, was a pagan not a Christian ideal. God had sent His Son into the world to save sinners and build up saints, not to make philosophers. And what, it was asked, had

been the outcome of the labours of these men who had given their hearts to know?

'What has been achieved,' asked Melanchthon, 'during many centuries by the scholastic theologians in their discussion of God, of His unity and trinity, of the mystery of creation, of the manner of the incarnation? Shall we not say that, in the words of Scripture, they became vain in their imaginations, or spent their lives in frivolous talk of universals, formalities, connotations and other empty terms? And their folly might not have mattered, were it not that these foolish disputations of theirs darkened the gospel, and concealed the benefits purchased by Christ.'[1]

In the Protestant period the same stages have been recapitulated. The Reformers sought to recall the Church to the sober Gnosticism of primitive Christianity. Though they held that knowledge could be rated too high, they also held that truth was a priceless part of the Christian heritage which it was a duty to confess, and for which it was glorious to suffer. They were primarily exponents of a scheme of salvation; but they also deemed themselves the stewards of a body of supernaturally communicated knowledge, which gave a view of existence as a whole, of the powers at work in the universe, and of the meaning and goal of creation. And they gladly travelled the philosophical road so long as the Bible served as a lamp to their path. If in the first instance they had been content to expound the Pauline epistles, Melanchthon soon felt the need of giving a conjunct view of the essential doctrines, and Calvin elaborated the materials in a comprehensive scheme which had the character of an all-embracing system of religious Philosophy. The sub-Reformation period was inspired by a profound sense of the importance of doctrinal Chris-

[1] *Loci Communes*, Praefatio.

tianity. In both branches of the Church, Lutheran and Reformed, there arose a second though a chastened Scholasticism, which was entirely at one with Rome in its exaltation of orthodoxy and its loathing of heresy, toiled unweariedly in the work of analysing, developing and systematising the doctrinal inheritance, and gloried in the possession of a system of thought which, bearing the divine hall-mark, settled every cardinal issue which is raised for human thought in regard to God and the world, duty and destiny. And this high estimate of religious knowledge, with the accompanying note of a confident Gnosticism, has been continued in various Protestant schools down to recent times. The attitude was long maintained in the evangelical section of the Reformed Church, and was as strongly represented in the nineteenth century by the *Systematic Theology* of Charles Hodge, as it had been in the seventeenth century by Turretin's *Theologia Elenctica*. The Lutheran Church, also, has had its Confessional School, represented in last century by Philippi and Luthardt, which proudly stood in the old paths. Hegel regarded the great dogmas as the soul and crown of Christianity —pouring scorn on the theologians who defended a Christianity which they had previously impoverished beyond recognition ; and the theological school which acknowledged his influence has been distinguished by its assertion of the depth and value of the fundamental doctrines of a philosophically construed Christianity. Modern Protestantism has, however, on the whole been identified with the depreciation of religious knowledge. From the overweening intellectualism of Protestant Scholasticism there was a swift and deep descent to the eighteenth-century Deism, which reduced the creed to the articles of God and immor-

tality, and cut down the plan of salvation to the requirement of virtuous conduct. The Critical Philosophy seriously contributed to the disparagement of Dogmatic Theology. Kant, it is true, offered a vindication of the doctrines of the divinity of Christ and of the Atonement, but only after interpreting them as parts of his ethical Philosophy; and it has generally been felt, whether justifiably or not, that postulates of the practical reason are not entitled to the same respect as truths which claim to be truths in the old-fashioned sense, and on old-fashioned grounds. The anti-intellectual reaction was also effectively promoted in a religious interest. German Pietism, as was said, laid the chief emphasis on conversion and fellowship with the risen Lord; and while magnifying the truth as it is in Jesus, it was indifferent to speculative and polemical doctrines which had not an obvious bearing on the spiritual life. This tendency was strongly reinforced by Schleiermacher, whose identification of religion with devout feeling involved the deposition of Theology from its high estate. He satirised the dominant rationalistic Theology as 'an ill-stitched patchwork of Metaphysics and Ethics,' and he was no more conciliatory towards Hegel than towards the Rationalismus Vulgaris. Schleiermacher went on, indeed, to construct an elaborate system of Dogmatic Theology; but it might not unfairly be described as rather a system of Religious Psychology, since he conceived the task of the theologian to be exhausted in a description of the states of Christian experience, and the attempt to trace them to their causes. The same type of thought has recurred in the French School of Symbolo-Fideism, and it underlies the Modernism of the Roman Catholic Church. The two streams of tendency met in the Ritschlian School.

It was a fundamental principle of the Ritschlian Theology that religious doctrines are exclusively value-judgments—*i.e.*, that they are statements of the worth which God has for the believer as enabling him to attain his chief end, and it was added that while they rest on revelation they have to be rigorously edited in accordance with the data of experience. Kaftan is constantly rebuking the old Theology for supposing that revelation involved the communication to the world of any knowledge of the theoretical and speculative kind. Apart from the influence of these principles, it was seen that certain parts of the inherited systems of doctrine had been undermined by Historical Criticism and Natural Science. And while Theology has shown itself increasingly diffident, the judgment of outsiders has often gone beyond disparagement. Comte, as was observed, declared that it was the chief intention of religion to explain things, and as it was added that its mode of explanation has now been superseded, the inference was that Theology has lost all title to respect. And this opinion has been widely influential.

In conclusion, something may be added on the stages of the recurring cycle, and on the moral which is suggested by the cycle.

The normal estimate, as was said, has been that religious knowledge is not merely a means to an end, but itself a good. This was the attitude of the founders, apostles and prophets of the ethical religions, and it has been characteristic of the periods of origins and revivals to which later generations have looked back as the golden ages. It was indeed natural that great stress was laid on the practical aspect. For those who offered, and also for those who sought a salvation, it was as evident that religious knowledge was indis-

pensable as it is evident to a generation which values material well-being that there is need of a provision for technical education. But also it is impossible to believe that religion is the vehicle of a comprehensive salvation without going on to hold that knowledge of God and divine things is more than a means to an end. For the fundamental article of the religious creed—viz., that in union with God man attains to the highest good, and is delivered from all evil—involves a divine gift of light and deliverance from ignorance. And if knowledge, as ordinary men have usually been willing to admit, and as the race of high-souled men have fervently believed, has an intrinsic worth apart from its profitableness, then a religion which makes an adequate response to human needs and aspirations is bound to include truth among the blessings which are guaranteed to man through the friendship and the grace of God. In fact, every religion that has moved the world has recognised that the intellect, as well as the heart and the will, has a title to have its claims recognised in any adequate salvation, and to receive illumination as an element in the portion of goods which falleth to it.

The exaggeration of the theoretical side of religion has recurred in the secondary period of every great faith, and it has taken the two forms of heightening the demands made for knowledge as a condition of salvation, and magnifying the value of knowledge in comparison with the other blessings of salvation. This valuation has been supported and furthered by the erudite class of disciples, and in some periods it has been sanctioned by the religious community in an extraordinary veneration of orthodoxy, and in the ruthless persecution of heresy. And it is only fair to remember that some things can be said

in explanation and justification of the attitude. When the Christian Church had come into existence, it was properly felt that much work had to be done in clarifying and expounding the doctrines that were bound up with its faith, and that if it suffered its teaching to be contaminated by heathen thought it was only a question of time when its life would sink to the heathen level. It was also natural that, when a learned class arose which was specially charged with the custody and the defence of the doctrinal heritage, it should think that the work which had been devolved upon it in the division of spiritual labour excelled all other in dignity and moment. And as a fact, to occupy oneself with religious truth, and to regard this occupation, as was done by Fathers and Scholastics, as the highest that is open to sinful man, is a position which ought to be spoken of respectfully, if theologians are to be judged like other intellectual workers. It is held in other fields to be supremely admirable when one takes for his principle 'knowledge for the sake of knowledge,' even if the information which he proceeds to collect be as trivial as it is useless. We admire Browning's scholar of whom it is written :

> He settled ὅτι's business—let it be,
> Properly based οὖν,
> Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic δέ
> Dead from the waist down.

Still greater respect is accorded to the scientist who devotes his labours to extend man's knowledge were it only of the inconsiderable odds and ends of our planet. And it is not clear why the world should have come to look contemptuously on Schoolmen, medieval and post-Reformation, who thought that their lives were well spent in busying themselves even with the smallest things in the divine temple, and

in seeking to penetrate more deeply into the region of divine mystery, and to suggest possible solutions of its innumerable problems. Moreover, the occupation with religious truth is well entitled to be regarded as a form of the religious life. It would be absurd to say that a man was religious when he prayed to God for fine weather or good health, or for a blessing on his children, but not when he busied himself with treasures of wisdom and knowledge which he revered as revealed truth, and which he sought to understand and appropriate in dependence on the Spirit of truth. And it is possible to think that it was not only a real type of religion, but also a very striking form of piety, when a thinker deemed the light which had shined into our darkness to be God's greatest gift to man, and did what in him lay, as a child of light and a servant of truth, to show his sense of the value of the divine gift. The only doubt is if the stage of exaggeration reflected the mind of Christ. While to rejoice in the truth is an authentic type of piety, enlightenment is improperly regarded as the highest good in a world of sin and misery which calls for renewal and sanctification as the chiefest need, and which appeals for manifold service in the spirit and after the pattern of the good Samaritan.

The third stage, in which exaggeration is followed by depreciation, can only be described in the light of religious history as pathological. This stage emerged in the evolution of ancient Polytheism, it has been traversed more than once in the history of Indian religions, and there is reason for saying that it has been again reached in the modern development of Christianity. It is a very serious fact that the knowledge of which the Christian Church is the custodian is so little esteemed as knowledge in the world of modern culture. It is still more serious

that the Protestant Church has been increasingly identified with the view that knowledge is an excrescence of religion, and that if there be religious knowledge it is only knowledge of a sort. The waning self-confidence of modern Theology is indeed intelligible and to some extent justifiable. It is the penalty which it pays for having been as confidently dogmatic about unimportant things which it did not know as about other things which were of vital importance, and of which it could be absolutely sure. But it is a lesson of history that the life and the power of the Church are dependent on its possession of knowledge about the greatest things, and on its being persuaded that it is real knowledge. A religion cannot be expected to influence the world, or even to hold up its head in it, if it can only touch the feelings and advise people to be good, and does not also teach a set of doctrines which make up a veritable religious Philosophy that lights up the universe, and gives definite answers to the persistent questions as to the nature of God, the relation of the world to God, and the chief end of man and the way of salvation. But if the situation is grave, it is a promise conveyed by history that it is only a transient phase. Every great spiritual movement of the past, which took form in the founding or the reformation of a religion, was bound up with a religious doctrine which led captive the mind of a nation or an age; and there is no reason to believe that the power which has once and again stirred the soul of mankind to its depths has made its last approach or has spent its force. One of the assured lessons of history is that when religion has been most feeble it has been on the eve of renewing its strength, and that when the neighbours have made ready to lay it in the grave it has risen again from the dead.

When next this happens there will be as before a definite selection and synthesis of Christian doctrines in which a new generation will rejoice as the assured theoretical content of their religion. And as before, the world will be willing and glad to believe that what came to it with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power bears the stamp of truth.

# CHAPTER X

## MAN'S VISIONS OF GOD

RELIGION implies belief in a God with whom man has to do. In his quest of salvation man has relied on the help of a Divine Being, and in the other forms of religious aspiration God has been presupposed as the supreme object that was to be obeyed, or to be beloved or to be contemplated in beatific vision. But while it may be said to be an article of the universal creed that there is a God, there has been much difference of opinion as to what God is. Though human beings taste of like experiences of good and evil with their attendant hopes and fears and desires, though they have the same entrances and exits, and the same mind with which to explore and interpret their situation, they have not been agreed as to what is the essential nature of the Divine Being, whether there be many gods or some or one, and what are the divine attributes, the divine purposes and the divine works. The ideas, in fact, which have been held about the Supreme Being have ranged from trivial and grotesque notions which the latter-day child finds ridiculous, to august doctrines in which the philosopher has recognised the quintessence of speculative wisdom; and from idols which bear the stamp of a terrorised or a foul imagination, to visions of incarnate or transcendent Godhead which enshrine the highest elements of spiritual beauty and sublimity that it has entered into the heart of man to conceive.

The questions which are naturally asked are—what has man believed concerning God? how did the beliefs arise? what truth, if any, do they contain? And to these correspond the tasks of description, genetic explanation and valuation, which have been undertaken from one standpoint by Theology, and from another by the Science of Religion and the Philosophy of Religion. The chief business of Theology has been to declare the knowledge of God prevalent in a particular religious community, and these statements of faith have been brought together in a comprehensive view in the History of Religions, and they have also to some extent been co-ordinated in a discipline of Comparative Theology. The genetic treatment of religious beliefs has always been felt to be fascinating. Theology has had much to say about beginnings — chiefly because it desired to fortify its knowledge of divine things by tracing it to a revelation; and the Science of Religion has addressed itself to the problems of origin with equal zest—largely because it desired to show that religion could be fitted with all other terrestrial phenomena into the evolutionary scheme, and that revelation was a gratuitous hypothesis. The valuation of theological ideas has gone on throughout the whole course of history—each religion being judged by its adherents to be true, and others of which they had knowledge being judged to be false, or at least to be adulterated with falsehood. And there are other tribunals to which the question has been referred. Reason instituted as a court of appeal the Philosophy of Religion, which has undertaken to make a survey of religious history as a whole, and has applied a rational criterion with a view to appraise the worth of each stage of the religious development, and to estimate the final outcome of this long-drawn

travail of the human spirit. The other tribunal is that which has been set up by Providence, and whose findings have been given in the form of the verdict of history. Its procedure is slow, as is usual with divine machinery, but it has already disposed of much business, and it may be said to be engaged in a summing-up in which it has put aside many claims, made clear what are the great surviving alternatives, and also given indications as to how the final judgment will fall out.

In this chapter I shall classify and summarily expound the ideas concerning God which have circulated in the world; and thereafter I shall test them by the criteria of value which are supplied in the religious view of existence and by the spirit of religious history.

## I

The objects of religious faith are commonly referred to by a generic term—as Gods, divinities or divine beings. As to the precise connotation of the term there has been a difference of opinion and usage. Some definitions are too narrow—as when Tylor makes the genus to be exclusively composed of 'spiritual beings,' and Flint limits it to beings which, 'while not indifferent to man's sentiments and actions,' are 'inaccessible to his senses.'[1] On the other hand, a God is something more than the object in which a man heartily believes, which he loves beyond all else, and which prescribes to him the chief end of his exertions. It is an object which affects the human being in a unique way by awakening in him a peculiar awe, and by impelling him to acts of worship. The

[1] *Theism*, [3], 1880, p. 32.

accompanying belief is that the object is in some sense supernatural, and that it wields an extraordinary power in the world, and in particular over the fortunes of the worshipper.

A rough list of the beings which have been worshipped is as follows : idols or fetishes, natural and artificial, species of plants and animals, forces and laws of nature, ghosts, demons, great deities, the impersonal Absolute, the infinite Personality, the unknown God. Using the categories of Descartes, we might classify these as extended substances, thinking substances, attributes of substance, and an unknown substance. In *The Evolution of Religion*, Dr. Caird has classified them as objects of external perception, perceiving subjects, and the Supreme Being, which, as constituting and transcending this distinction, may be termed the subject-object. But it may be said of Caird's third and highest type of the idea of God, that it is equally difficult for the agnostic to recognise in it the Unknowable, and for the Christian Church to identify it with the personal God who was revealed in Christ. It seems better to adopt a simple form of classification which accords with ordinary thinking, and to distinguish as two main divisions the classes of things and souls or selves, and as a third the unknown entity or mystery. The things revered as divine fall into the two sub-classes of sensible objects and invisible forces, while the sensible objects may be further divided into the inanimate and the animate. The souls or selves form an ascending series, the successive stages of which are represented by the subhuman spirit, the superhuman spirit and the Infinite Personality. In accordance with this we may distinguish four main types of theological thought — the realistic, which conceives the thing as such to be divine, or identifies

the sensible object with the Divine Being; the dynamistic, which construes the divine as an impersonal energy; the pneumatistic, which ascribes to it the personal mode of existence; and the agnostic, which denies the likeness of the divine to any other known kind of being. We may further distinguish two varieties of realistic thought—the materialistic, which views inanimate things, and the vitalistic, which views living things as divine. It is, however, to be remembered that the one religious object has been construed in different ways, and that its *prima facie* character, or what may be called its face-value, does not uniformly determine the thoughts and the attitude of the worshipper.[1]

[1] This classification may be given in tabular form as follows:

A. THINGS.

*Sensible Objects.*

| 1. *Inanimate.* | 2. *Animate.* |
|---|---|
| (*a*) Artificial; (*b*) Natural. Fetishism, Nature-worship. Materialism. | Plant-worship, Animal-worship. Organic Pantheism. |

B. FORCES.

*Invisible Energies.*

| 1. *Sporadic.* | 2. *Universal.* |
|---|---|
| Mana. Forces and Laws of Nature. Idolatry. Naturistic Polytheism. Dynamistic Pantheism. | The Principle of the Universe. Spiritual Pantheism. |

C. SELVES.

| 1. *Human and Subhuman.* | 2. *Superhuman.* | 3. *Infinite.* |
|---|---|---|
| Souls, Ghosts, Demons. Animism. Polydaemonism. | Gods. Humanistic Polytheism. Dualism. | God. Monotheism. |

D. MYSTERIES.

The Unknown Deity.
Agnosticism.

A.—According to the realistic view, as we have termed it, the Divine Being is a sensible object, possessed of inherent properties which invest it with a supernatural dignity. That the sensible object as such has been adored and entreated as a self-contained deity, has been confidently affirmed and as emphatically denied. The Old Testament prophets took it for granted that the heathen and the Hebrew backsliders worshipped as gods the works of their own hands, with birds and beasts and creeping things. And the sages of India and of Greece have placed a similar construction on popular religion. On the other hand, it is now generally held that the idolater does not really render homage and supplication to the fetish which he sees and handles. 'From the very first,' says D'Alviella, 'worship must have been addressed, not to the material object conceived as such, but to the personality supposed to be embodied in it.'[1] But neither the universal affirmative nor the universal negative is justified by the evidence. Some worshippers have bowed before the sacred thing as itself possessed of divine qualities, some have hoped or trembled because of a mysterious energy with which they supposed the fetish to be charged, and some have reverenced a spirit which made in it its abode. In the Christian Church it is common ground that the sacramental elements bring the soul into the presence of the divine; but the Roman Catholic has revered them as the very body and blood of the Lord, the Lutheran has been taught to worship a divine substance that is present in, with, and under the corporeal substance, and the thoughts of the Calvinist have been lifted up to heavenly places where Christ is exalted at the right hand of God. And it may be taken for certain that

[1] *Origin and Growth of the Conception of God*, 1892, p. 97.

analogous differences of attitude and interpretation have prevailed among the heathen.

1. The worship of the artificial idol was no doubt a secondary development. It cannot well be supposed that men set out to manufacture a God ; rather must it be thought that, having previously seen reason to believe in a God of some sort, they proceeded to make the best likeness which they could imagine out of the most suitable materials which were at their disposal. But it is also very credible that, after the idol had become an established institution, it could be accepted by the multitude, and by the average worshipper, as being to all intents and purposes a God. We cannot completely set aside the testimony of the many witnesses of antiquity who assert that the way of the vulgar was to identify the object before which they bowed with the Divinity in which they put their trust. The human mind is quite capable of the crassest thinking ; and that the heathen were capable of it is supported by the observation that, in the Church which is founded on faith in the God who is a Spirit, so much could be made of images and pictures that the worship has often been declared to have degenerated into pure idolatry.

The worship of natural objects has been more unambiguously associated with the materialistic view. These objects may be divided into three classes which start from the crudest superstition and reach the intellectual climax of an imposing metaphysical doctrine. The lowest stage is that of the minor nature-worship, at which the venerated things are casual objects, or odds and ends—as a stone with some peculiarity of shape or colour or origin, a fragment of iron, a shell, a bunch of gaudy feathers. A much higher plane was reached in the worship of great objects of the external

world—as the earth, the mountain, the river, the sea, the sky, the sun, the moon and the stars. While the higher and the lower nature-worship were certainly understood and justified in different ways, the realistic interpretation has undoubtedly had a large following. The earth and the sky seemed so wonderful, and did such wonderful things, that it is not surprising if many said that one of these was enough of a Divinity for them, and left it to others, if they cared, to make more speculative ventures. At the end of this process of thought the world as a whole was conceived as a material object, attained the dignity of the Supreme Being, and was held to be the basis of all which exists, and the source of all operative energies. In this development Theology became a system of Philosophy whose cardinal tenet was that matter is the ultimate reality and the bedrock of the universe—being the ground and principle, not only of all visible objects and of all mechanical movements and chemical changes, but also of all the ferment of human experience which common sense credits to beings who have souls as well as bodies, and traces to the activity of their minds and wills. It thus seems that the materialist, who, from the time of Democritus, has sought to discredit religion by tracing its origin to unreason, may be regarded as himself the lineal descendant of the least intelligent of the religious subjects of the times of primeval superstition, since his philosophy, as Comte observed, turns out to be little more respectable than a consummated and disguised Fetishism.

2. The realistic type of theological thought is further represented by the religions in which the Divine Being has been conceived as identical with, if not exhausted in, certain classes of plants and animals.

This conception is specially associated with Totemism. Totemism is, indeed, much more than a religion. It is primarily a peculiar form of social organisation, based on a peculiar view of the scheme of life which is marked by features some of which strike us as utterly fantastic, and some as sensible and useful. It has also, like other prehistoric institutions, touches of modernity —as in its theory of the descent of the human clan from an animal species, the position accorded to woman, and the provisions in regard to bars to marriage which anticipated to some extent the programme of Eugenics. But the totem-clan was also a religious community; and while it made use of different types of Theology, the *de facto* divinity doubtless was the species of animals or plants from which it took its name, which was regarded as its progenitor, with which it was joined in a mystic alliance, and on which it was dependent for the quickening of its vitality and the reinvigoration of its powers. And the veneration of the living thing has prevailed far outside the limits of the totemistic form of tribal life. The worship of the forest as the source of life and well-being is still met with among savage tribes; and plant-worship was carried over in various forms into the nomadic and the agricultural stages of civilisation. The reawakening in spring of things that seemed to have died, the new surge of life that was observed in germination and growth and took to itself the beautiful garments of leaf and blossom, the prodigal luxuriance of the summer, and the gathering up of the travail of the year in the harvest of fruits and grain—all this could well seem to be the climax of the extraordinary and the uncanny, and the more so when drought and famine brought home to the tribe its utter dependence for existence and comfort on the bounty that is shown by the green earth to man and

beast. Moreover, as Spencer pointed out, there were trees and herbs from which drugs were extracted that gave the experience of an unwonted exaltation or tranquillity of soul, and were therefore thought to be of divine quality, or the gifts of a supernatural Being.[1] This last point of view is entirely intelligible, as there has continued to be a world-wide sect which has found in the 'nervous stimulant' the substitute for God, whose prayer has been 'Soma, do thou enter into us, full of kindness,' and which has possessed its counterpart and travesty of the highest religious experience in the indulgence in which it was found that an accusing past was forgotten, a miserable present was transfigured, and a frowning future was robbed of its terrors. The spirit of plant-worship has survived in schools of poetry, and is appreciated by ordinary people who are able to realise the miracle of the seasons, and to find happiness in tending a garden. And Science has revealed that those who worshipped the plant-life of the earth had a better reason for exalting it than they knew; for if the sun be in a way the God of the external world, as the source of the physical energies of men and animals, it is the kingdom of the plants which acts as mediator between them and the solar Divinity, and which is sacrificed to the end that the creatures may have life and strength.

The worship of animals has been more widespread and tenacious, and has assumed more impressive forms. The animals have dropped into the background in the modern centres of civilisation except as articles of food, those that were formidable and useless have been exterminated or put to flight, those that were useful to mankind have been made his slaves, and even in this capacity are being largely

[1] *The Principles of Sociology*, 1885, vol. i. pp. 346 ff.: 'Plant-worship.'

displaced by superior machines; but there was a long past during which the chief incidents of the lot of man were his encounters with the beasts, and the question of the day was whether he was to eat or to be eaten, and when he must have looked on them with awe as his co-equal competitors for the lordship of the world. The prehistoric drawings in the caves of Western Europe point to a primeval association of religious thought and practice with the animal creation; and the awestruck impressions were gathered up at a later day, as in Beowulf, in the legends of brutish monsters that wasted fields and slaughtered men. The faith and the veneration acquired a new lease of life in a modified form in the therianthropic Polytheism of Babylonia and of Egypt. And a use was still found for some of the features in the system of ethical Monotheism; for the cherubim of the prophetic visions borrowed strength and majesty from the lion, the ox and the eagle, and Satan took on the form of the serpent or the dragon.

It might be inquired whether there was a stage at which the female sex was regarded with the same kind of veneration which was paid to sacred species of animals. Nature, no doubt, teaches the man, as it instructs the male animal, to accept the woman as a being of his own kind, and on this footing to associate with her, to protect her and to provide for her wants; but the human being came to have a mind that made him differ radically from the brutes, and an incidental result was that he could think out things to very extraordinary conclusions, one of which may quite well have been that he came to suppose that the female sex formed a special class of uncanny and supernatural beings. For the man felt that the woman exercised upon him a peculiar fascination—to be represented

in Greek mythology by the shafts of Cupid—hers was the miracle of child-bearing by which the tribe was replenished and saved from destruction, and when the man was engaged in war or the chase she could be thought of as a Sibyl who brooded and wove her spells in the darkness and the silence of the cave. And there is historical evidence that she has been regarded as a being of another kind. The Old Testament teaches that Eve was made of a rib taken from Adam's side, and this may have been intended as an argument in support of the unity of the human species, and a refutation of a contrary opinion which was in vogue among the ancestors of the Hebrews or among adjacent tribes. The matriarchal system, in which descent was traced through the female line, may have owed something to a principle of the divine right of woman; and this principle may also have left its mark in those polytheistic systems in which goddesses had the pre-eminence, and the priestess and the prophetess were held in high honour as the chosen organs of deity.

The vitalistic conception of the Divine Being, as we have termed it, was developed by way of Polytheism to its philosophical goal. The phenomena of germination and generation continued to make a deep impression as the standing marvel of the course of nature; and it was characteristic of Semitic Polytheism that the highest honours were paid to gods and goddesses representing the principle of fertility, and that the most popular of their sacred rites were those which were practised at the shrines in a setting of revelry and debauchery. In the world-picture of the Scandinavian skalds the good Gods are personifications of the productive energies of nature, and the ash Igdrasil has been interpreted as the symbol of

a vitalistic interpretation of the ultimate principle of the universal scheme of things.

'I like that representation they have of the tree Igdrasil,' says Carlyle. 'All life is figured by them as a tree. Igdrasil, the ash-tree of existence, has its roots deep down in the kingdoms of Hela or Death; its trunk reaches up heaven-high, spreads its boughs over the whole Universe; it is the tree of Existence. . . . Its "boughs," with their buddings and disleafings, events, things suffered, things done, catastrophes, stretch through all lands and times. Is not every leaf of it a biography, every fibre there an act or word? Its boughs are histories of Nations. The rustle of it is the noise of human existence onwards from of old. . . . Considering how human things circulate, each inextricably in communion with all—I find no similitude so true as this of a tree. Beautiful: altogether beautiful and great. "The Machine of the Universe"—alas, do but think of that in contrast.'[1]

Flint may have had this passage in mind when he wrote:

'There are Pantheists who have conceived the absolute unity under the similitude of organic life. To them the universe has presented itself as a vast organism, everywhere instinct with a self-developing vitality. But surely there can be neither unity nor absoluteness in a life which is inseparable from physical conditions, confined within organic limits, and which grows like a plant or an animal. Anthropomorphism may be a poor theory, but it must be better than phytomorphism or zoomorphism. To conceive of the absolute after the manner of a plant or a beast may be poetical, but it is so plainly irrational as to call for no discussion.'[2]

Whatever be the merits of the theory, it certainly calls for discussion, and within the last generation it has bespoken somewhat respectful discussion. For

[1] *Lectures on Heroes*, i.
[2] *Anti-Theistic Theories*, 1879, p. 417.

Carlyle's description of the totality of things as of the nature of a tree might be regarded as the text of *L'Évolution Créatrice* of M. Bergson, who rejects with equal emphasis the mechanical and the teleological interpretations, and represents the universe of living beings as resulting from the impulsion and the modifications of a single vital force, which in some way introduced itself into matter, shaped and organised it, adapted it to its environment, and flowered in intelligent thought, and in the rational, aesthetic and moral achievements of the race.

B.—1. The dynamistic doctrine construes the divine, not as a sensible object possessing inherent powers of the supernatural kind, but as a force which is concentrated in various objects, and which invests them with a divine character. The rudimentary form of the doctrine is represented by the Melanesian notion of *mana*, and by the kindred beliefs of the North American Indians and of the aboriginal tribes of Australia. The savage, it appears, recognises a force about which he thinks in much the same way that the white man thinks about electricity—viz., as a power which does extremely useful work, but which also, being very dangerous, has to be approached and handled with the utmost circumspection. It may also be illustrated by the idea of the lucky object, by the sense of a mystic property which differentiates the banknote from ordinary paper, by the impression of a peculiar virtue which goes forth from a great man, and by the feelings awakened by the supposed presence of a ghost. The *mana* of the Melanesian is thus described by Bishop Codrington :

' It is a power or influence, not physical and in a way supernatural, which shows itself in physical force or in any kind of power or influence which a man possesses.' ' It is not fixed

in anything and can be conveyed in anything, but spirits, whether disembodied souls or supernatural beings, have it and can impart it, and it essentially belongs to personal beings to originate it, though it may act through the medium of water or a stone or a bone.' It is a force which 'acts in all kinds of ways for good or evil, which it is of the greatest advantage to possess or control.' 'If a man has been successful in fighting, it has not been his natural strength of arm, quickness of eye, or readiness of resource that has won success; he has certainly got the *mana* of a spirit or of some deceased warrior to empower him, conveyed in an amulet of a stone tied around his neck, or a tuft of leaves in his belt, in a tooth hung upon a finger of his bow-hand, or in the form of words with which he brings supernatural assistance to his side.' [1]

Marett and Söderblom [2] have shown that the uncanny force, while it may have a favourite receptacle in human souls and in other spiritual beings, exists independently of them, and that it can be introduced without their mediation into numerous other objects, both animate and inanimate. The idea of *mana* has doubtless supplied a subtler theology to adherents of religious systems in which the ostensible object of worship was a visible thing. It must have seemed to reflective minds the better notion, that the fetish or the totem owed its dignity to its special enrichment with a portion of the invisible divine stuff that worked wonders up and down the world. Under Polydaemonism the spirits were naturally regarded as centres and dispensers of *mana*. In the polytheistic systems it was conceived that an influence proceeded from the gods which stamped a peculiar impress on holy places and holy things, and which could also fill the mind with a divine frenzy.

2. A second form of the dynamistic conception of deity is met with in the higher nature-worship of the

[1] *The Melanesians*, 1891, pp. 118 ff.

[2] *Das Werden des Gottesglaubens*, 1916, pp. 33 ff.

polytheistic systems of Oriental and classical antiquity. The earth, the sky and the other great objects of nature could be venerated, not as themselves divine, but rather as objects in which divine energies had their seat, and in which they were operative and manifest. The modification of the conception was that instead of the one mysterious force, a number of principles came to be recognised with diverse characters and functions. This dynamistic pluralism, as it may be termed, was the intellectual substance of much that took imaginative form in the mythological creations of ancient Polytheism. The polytheistic system of the Vedas was founded on a recognition of natural powers on which man felt himself dependent for existence and well-being—he needed light and he worshipped Varuna, water for his crops and his flocks and he worshipped Indra the storm-god, fire and he worshipped Agni, terrible yet beneficent, and high in honour with them was Soma, deification of sap, which could seem to be the very essence of all living things, and to make the difference between life and death. The Scandinavian mythology rested on a general impression that had been received of the constitution and course of nature; and its chief figures are easily identified as personifications of the powers which can be divined in the conflict of light and darkness, and in the ebb and flow of the tides of death and life that lay waste and again renew and replenish the earth. Similarly the classical mythology had its great gods who had originally represented the principles operative in the realm of nature, but it extended their functions so as to make recognition of the principles that inspire and govern the intellectual, the aesthetic, the political and the moral life of human societies.

3. At a third stage Theology reverted to the concep-

tion of a single force, and the attempt was made to consolidate and unify the system of powers and laws which had come to be revered as divine. This movement led along one line to Monotheism. Along another line, and more characteristically, the effort after unity issued in a dynamistic Monism or Pantheism. The quest was similar to that of the early Greek philosophers who reduced the elements to one, and declared this to be the basis and substance of all the contents of the external world—the difference being that religious thought went deeper and affirmed a spiritual principle which was the basis and substance of Gods and men, and of all things visible and invisible, and which was the efficient agent in all doings and happenings throughout the universe. This doctrine was probably understood by the sages to be the deepest meaning of the worship of Heaven and Earth in the state-religion of China, it was developed in the priestly circles of Babylonia and Egypt, it was the distinctive message of the Indian Philosophy which built on the foundation of the Vedas, it was held by the Eleatics and the Stoics, and it has been embodied in a series of philosophical systems which have deeply influenced the intellectual life of the modern Western world.

The pantheistic scheme of thought is definite and consistent in regard to certain fundamental moments of the being of God, as well as in regard to certain attributes and works of God, while in respect of the distinctive character of the Divine Being, Pantheism speaks with an uncertain sound and with contradictory voices. The moments of the being of God which are unanimously affirmed are unity and infinitude. God is one, not merely in the sense that there is one God only, but in the sense that nothing truly exists save God—'there is one being and no second.' He is infinite, not

merely in the sense that He possesses all perfections, but in the sense that there is nothing other than God—that all which exists is embraced within the Divine Being, and that all which occurs is a mode of the divine life and activity. On the negative side it is axiomatic that the Infinite is not to be conceived as an individual subject who distinguishes himself from other beings, and who is conscious of himself. God is impersonal, and self-consciousness can only be attributed to Him in the sense that it has emerged in classes of finite beings that have emanated from the divine source. The Infinite Being, next, is clothed with the most glorious perfections. He is the eternal—the Being that was before all and outlasts all, or rather who is outside of time-conditions. He is the immanent God—and that in the sense, not merely that He is present in all finite creatures which exist under spatial conditions, but that He is in them as their essence, and as the abiding spring of their life and power. He is in all things, so the Hindu father taught his son, as the melted salt is in the water. 'That which is the subtile essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the true. It is the Self, and thou, O Svetaketu, art it.'[1] This operative omnipotence is often made to appear the brightest jewel in God's crown :

> Was wär' ein Gott, der nur von aussen stiesse,
> Im Kreis das All am Finger laufen liesse,
> Ihm ziemt's die Welt im Innern zu bewegen,
> Natur in sich, sich in Natur zu hegen,
> So dass, was in Ihm lebt und webt und ist,
> Nie seine Kraft, nie seinen Geist vermisst.[2]

The Infinite is in respect of power the Omnipotent. The attributes of knowledge and wisdom He possesses

[1] Khandogya-Upanishad, *S.B.E.*, 1900, i. pp. 5, 104.
[2] Goethe, *Gott und Welt*, Procœmion.

at least in the sense that He is the author of the finite minds that know and of the rational results that have been achieved in the cosmic process, and He possesses the moral attributes in the sense that from Him have sprung the beings that acknowledge a moral law, and that He has constituted the moral order which they recognise. As to the works of the Infinite, He is the ground of the world, and of all things therein—the fire which has filled a universe with its beams and sparks, the ocean from which all waters proceed and to which they return, the soul which has made for itself a body, and clothed itself therewith as with a garment and decked itself with jewels. The labour of the Infinite is a *creatio continua*. The divine causality is of universal sweep, and is subject to no restrictions or qualifications. The divine soul of the universe, as Pope says in one of his few clumsy lines, is 'as full as perfect in a hair as heart.' It is, moreover,

> As full as perfect in vile man that mourns,
> As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns.

God was incarnate in the sinless Christ, who out of love to men died upon the Cross, but so was He also incarnate in the Jews who prevailed upon Pilate to put Him to death, and in the disciple who betrayed the Son of Man with a kiss.

There remains, however, the important question as to the essential nature of the Being to whom the infinite attributes and the mighty works are ascribed, and on this point Pantheism has been a house divided against itself. One of two answers might be given: it could be said that God belongs to an order of being which is akin to ourselves and is therefore knowable, or it could be said that He belongs to an order of being which is utterly different from

ourselves and is therefore unknowable. God, it is often said, can only be described by negatives, and so Pantheism has passed over into Agnosticism. On the whole, however, the pantheist, who has rejoiced in the tremendous vistas of knowledge that have opened up before him, has been unwilling to end with a confession of ignorance, and he has undertaken to construe the divine essence in positive terms. If, now, he was to affirm anything positive of the nature of God, there were in turn two fundamental possibilities—that the Divine Being is of the nature of matter, or that it is of the nature of spirit. When the former alternative has been adopted it leads to a Materialistic Pantheism. The usual course has been to conceive of the Absolute, though it is axiomatic that He is not a person, as at least Spirit, and as living the life and doing the works of Spirit. And if the conception was to be made more definite this could best be done by utilising our knowledge of spirit as that which thinks and wills, and by fastening on thought or on will as yielding the inmost secret of the Godhead. This has, in fact, been the procedure, and the chief types of Pantheism are distinguished according as God has been conceived of as essentially a rational principle or as an energising will. The conception of the Absolute which has been most favoured is that its essential activity is thinking, and there has even been a tendency to discard the category of substance, and to resolve the Divine Being into a mere process of thought. The notion that God is essentially a thinking being was the import of the Indian thesis ' That art thou ' : what was meant was that we have a clear intuition of the nature of the Being which is the world-ground and the spring of all activity when we look within and observe the mind at its work. Similarly, according to Hegel,

'the Absolute is interpretable only in terms of mind, for mind is the highest type of individuality with which we have any acquaintance.' God, in the Hegelian system, is the principle of a process of rational thought which unfolded in accordance with the dialectic that governs the development of the idea, and which has its monuments in the stages that have been traversed in cosmical and terrestrial evolution, and notably in the tortuous march of the history of mankind.

It has been matter of prolonged controversy whether in defining the Absolute as spirit Hegel conceived of God in Himself as impersonal or as personal spirit. That He was thought of as an eternal and independent centre of self-conscious existence seems to be implied in the repeated repudiations of Pantheism, and to be borne out by the emphatic affirmation that 'the absolute Spirit as personality' is the truth of the idea of God.[1] But the Pantheism which Hegel repudiated was merely the realistic type of thought which identifies the phenomenal universe with God, and his chief concern was to affirm as against this view 'the coherence of the phenomenal world in a single being.' Further, by the truth of an idea Hegel understood the culmination of a process: the plant, for example, is the truth of the bud, the flower of the plant, the fruit of the flower; and on these terms the personality of God would be the truth concerning God in the sense, not that He is eternally personal spirit, but that personality was achieved as the result of the Absolute becoming incarnate in human beings and other rational creatures who have risen in time to the level of self-conscious existence.[2] 'Without the world,' he says, 'God is not God': if the world be dependent on God for its existence, it would seem that God is no less dependent on the world for providing Him with a body, and in particular on the finite spirits in which He has become aware

[1] *Erl. Ausg.*, vi. 23. [2] xi. 194, 2.

of Himself and also has appreciated the scope and the significance of His works.[1]

The second grand alternative is to conceive of the Divine Being as essentially a productive and determining will, which may or may not be also a rational and a beneficent will. It may be said that Buddha was a pantheist for whom God was will, since He recognised an eternal principle which is immanent in and upholds the world-order, and which, while responsible for the calamity of existence, is so far an ethical will that it ensures the operation of a retributive justice. Schopenhauer also found in volition the clue to the nature of ultimate reality.

'When we observe,' he says, 'the mighty and ceaseless onset of the waters of the deep, the constancy with which the magnet turns to the pole, the yearning with which the iron flies to the magnet, the tendency of a weight to fall to the earth and similar phenomena, it costs no great effort of the imagination, great as is the distance which separates us, to recognise in what is there done blindly and dumbly the likeness to that which in us pursues its purposes by the light of knowledge. And just as the first streaks of dawn share with the noonday-beams the name of sunlight, so there as here the name of will must be given to that which is the absolute essence of everything in the world, and the sole kernel of all that appears.' [2]

It has to be added that for Schopenhauer the Absolute was an utterly irrational and unethical will which is guided by no leading idea, but is merely urged on by an insatiable and reckless lust of production. The remaining possibility is that the Absolute might

[1] ii. 591. Drews, *Deutsche Spekulation*, 1895, i. pp. 265 ff. A different interpretation of Hegel's theology is given by Hutcheson Stirling, *The Secret of Hegel*, 1898, pp. 720 ff.

[2] Condensed from *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, i. 140.

be interpreted in terms of feeling. It would not have been surprising if this line also had been followed out, and the doctrine had been propounded that the Absolute is essentially an ocean of feeling. For there was something to found on in the fact that feeling is the most widely diffused of the manifestations of psychical life, and also that there are many phenomena in nature and history which resemble the ebb and flow of the feelings, and might therefore suggest that a mindless emotionalism is the soul of the totality of things.

C.—The most important type of theological doctrine is that which construes the divine nature as belonging to the same order of being as the conscious self. The idea of a soul is met with among the lowest as well as the highest races ; it has been developed, but has not been radically altered in the idea of personality ; and the conception that God is of the nature of a conscious self or a personal spirit is traceable throughout the known history of religion. It would be natural to call this the spiritual view were it not that the impersonal Absolute of Pantheism has also been commonly declared to belong to the realm of spirit. The term animistic was used by Tylor to embrace all forms of the conception, but there is a natural repugnance to ascribing a soul to God, and describing Theism as a form of Animism. I have therefore called the general conception the pneumatistic doctrine.

The spiritual beings to which man has ascribed a self-conscious life after the pattern of his own, fall into classes which are marked by widely different characteristics, and which form a graduated scale along several lines. They are distinguished, in the first place, according as God has been said to be many —as in Polydaemonism ; some—as in Polytheism ; two—as in Dualism ; and one—as in Monotheism.

The properties ascribed to them have corresponded generally with the numerical scale, and that in respect both of the nature and the degree of the divine attributes. In general it may be said that the many have had power but little wisdom and goodness, the few have had power and wisdom and no little goodness, the two have had power and wisdom and have been distinguished as good and evil, the One has been almighty, all-wise and all-good. The works ascribed to Deity have been consonant with the conceptions formed of the being and the attributes, and have been of every degree of importance from transactions affecting the pettiest interests of the individual upward to the control of the destinies of the race and the creation and preservation of the universe.

1. At the bottom of the scale are species of souls on the human and subhuman levels, which may be denominated the animistic group proper. The general doctrine of Animism is that the important beings of the world are souls, which are either human souls or others which are formed on the same pattern and behave in similar ways, and that everything which happens, or at least every unusual and arresting event, is due to the agency of one or other of these spiritual entities. On this foundation there was developed a very comprehensive system of thought, which provided savage man with a Natural Philosophy and a Psychology as well as a Theology. Specially important is the animistic Psychology. It is often said that introspection is a late achievement of cultured humanity, and no doubt it is only in the civilised era that it has been practised with real success ; but Animism has its very elaborate psychological doctrine, and the savage is prepared to tender much

fuller information about the nature and the powers of the soul than would be attempted by any of ourselves who did not chance to have been a professed student of the subject. The principal articles of the Psychology of the savage may be summarised as follows :

(1) Every man has at least two souls, which may be distinguished as the corporeal soul or soul-stuff, and as the breath-soul or apparitional soul.

(2) The corporeal soul or soul-stuff has the following characters :—(*a*) it is diffused throughout the body, but is collected in special intensity and richness in certain parts, as the heart, the brain, the kidneys, the hair, and in the blood and the secretions ; (*b*) it is lost or impaired by removal of or injury to these parts and contents of the body, or by magical practices directed to them ; (*c*) it is replenished and strengthened by acquiring, and especially by eating other bodies charged with, soul-stuff ; (*d*) it is not destroyed at death, though it may no longer be associated with a conscious individual.

(3) The apparitional soul is a material or semi-material substance, like a film or vapour, which is a visible, if not tangible, image or shadow of the body, though it also on occasion assumes other shapes.

(4) The apparitional soul has the power of leaving the body temporarily during life, especially in dreams and sickness.

(5) The susceptibilities of the soul include (*a*) receptiveness for communications in dreams from ghosts and other spirits ; (*b*) liability to take offence at bad treatment or a supposed want of respect ; (*c*) exposure to injury from magical practices and from the machinations of spirits ; (*d*) prevention by accident or design from returning to the body after temporary absence.

(6) The soul proper survives death at least for a time, haunts the familiar scenes, and takes to do with the survivors ; but there is also an abode of the departed spirits in the sky, or in islands of the sea, or in distant places or under the earth.

The souls which have been treated as belonging to

the sphere of the divine have been of three classes—the souls of living persons, departed souls, and souls of a kindred sort which are usually called demons.

(*a*) In view of the powers and capacities which he ascribed to the human soul the savage has found a quasi-religious object in his own spiritual constitution. He has venerated the spiritual entity which he found in himself as a higher order of being, has been careful not to offend it, has placated it with good things, has protected it by seeking to deposit it in a safe place in time of danger, and has addressed to it expostulations and supplications. The souls of others could be felt to have similar claims, and it has been considered an argument against punishing a child that its soul might take umbrage at the treatment and flee away. The souls of exceptional persons, notably the chief and the medicine-man, excited a veneration proportionate to the degree in which they towered above the common herd, and this sentiment lived on into later periods in the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and in the investiture of priesthoods with divine prerogatives.

(*b*) Better established has been the religious status of departed souls, especially the souls of ancestors. 'The worship of the Manes or ancestors,' as Tylor observes, 'has been one of the main branches of the religions of mankind.'[1] Ancestor-worship is of high antiquity. It is vouched for in the prehistoric ages by the dolmen and the cromlech, which were certainly associated with the cult of the dead, and are perhaps the monuments of a spiritualistic movement which in early times swept over southern and western Europe, and gave a new direction and intensity to man's communion with the unseen realm. The cult has struck

[1] *Primitive Culture*, ii. p. 113.

root among all races, it has sometimes dominated the religious life, when overpowered it has usually been able to make terms with its conqueror, and to this day millions find in it their chief religious occupation and consolation.

What the worshippers of ancestral spirits have actually thought and intended in addressing themselves to the dead has been the subject of much controversy. It has been held by one group of anthropologists that these were regarded as friendly beings with whom it was a privilege and a loving duty to hold communion ; and by another that they were unfriendly beings against whom they had to protect themselves by defensive and offensive measures. It would seem that, while some could be reckoned on as well disposed—as the chief, the father, and the old friend who had passed from sight—the ghosts were regarded as on the whole wayward and malicious, and even disposed to be jealous and vindictive out of resentment at the cruel fate which had overtaken themselves. It has also been disputed whether ancestor-worship is really intended as the worship of divine beings. Some missionaries have declared it to be sheer and abominable idolatry, while others have seen in it a mode of showing reverence and gratitude to the departed which could easily be brought into harmony with the teaching of the Christian Church in regard to the communion of the saints. Doubtless the actual position has been, and is, that there have been many whose converse with the dead was neither more nor less of worship than the respectful attentions which they showed to earthly superiors, and the kind offices which they rendered to their friends ; while others—and these perhaps the majority—looked on the spirits as veritably belonging to the sphere of godhead, and

offered to them the highest adoration which it was in the power of their souls to offer.

(*c*) The third class of souls, the demons, have counted for much in the lower faiths. They have usually been supposed to be extremely numerous. 'The number of supernatural beings,' we are told, 'that the aborigines of Australia acknowledge is exceedingly numerous ; for not only are the heavens peopled with such, but the whole face of the country swarms with them ; every thicket, most watering-places, and all rocky places abound with evil spirits—all apparently striving to do all imaginable mischiefs to the poor blackfellow.' [1] A similar account is given of the cloud of demons that encompass the African negro, and carry on a treacherous and ruthless warfare against him and human kind. These evil-minded spirits were usually homeless vagrants. It has, however, been generally supposed that the demons which acquired a fixed habitation shared in the better qualities which naturally go with a settled life, and the acquisition of a stake in the country. They illustrated the observation of Benjamin Franklin :

> I never knew an oft-removed tree,
> Nor yet an oft-removed family,
> That throve so well as those that settled be.

2. The superhuman class of souls is represented by the gods of the polytheistic systems of antiquity. They were distinguished from the hosts of spirits in important particulars—the many were reduced to the few, they acquired an individuality, a name and a history, they were exalted in power and wisdom, and they were on the whole benevolent and beneficent. On the other hand, the power of each god was limited by that of the rest of the divine society, as well as by

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 1899.

the external world; they were not wholly wise, and they were far from being perfectly good according to the best human standards. Polytheism, especially in its polytheistic form, has had an immense fascination for mankind, and when discredited and overthrown by spiritual and intellectual forces it has maintained itself under the ægis of Pantheism as a legitimised idolatry, while it has revived within the pale of Monotheism in the form of the worship of angels and of patron-saints. Man has felt drawn to divine beings who were sufficiently like himself to make him feel at home, and who also surpassed the measures of humanity in a degree which inspired great confidence. Doubtless Polytheism has acted as a bulwark against Atheism; for while the monotheist who has found that the heavens were deaf to his petitions has often abandoned his faith in sorrow or in wrath, the polytheist could think that he had only made the mistake of applying to the wrong quarter, and could preserve his faith while he transferred his affections and his allegiance elsewhere.

3. In the dualistic system the many divine powers were reduced to two, the good attributes were concentrated in a good God and the bad attributes in an evil God, and the business of the universe and the decisive events in human history were distributed between them. In the pure form of Dualism the benevolent and the malevolent divinities have been conceived to be like in dignity and power, to be utterly irreconcilable, and to contend on equal terms in an age-long conflict of which the final issue is uncertain. It would, however, appear that in every system which has made a considerable figure in the world—save perhaps in Manichaeism—it has been believed that the good God was the greater in wisdom and in might, and

was destined to prevail in the end. In the Scandinavian world-drama, the last scene is not the twilight of the Gods, but the dawn of the brighter day and the restoration of all things. The doctrine of Zoroaster was that, at the close of a conflict between Ormuzd and Ahriman, extending over many thousands of years, the good God gains the victory, purifies the earth and its inhabitants by fire, and builds for them a heaven of enduring holiness and felicity. Historic Christianity has had a dualistic aspect in that it has recognised Satan as the powerful adversary of God; but it rejected the principle of dualism by making the Devil completely subject to the permissive and controlling decree of God; and it achieved a final consolidation of the universe through the punishment of the diabolic spirits, and the reduction of their arrogant power to eternal impotence.

4. The series culminates in the monotheistic doctrine. The doctrine is met with in rudimentary form in the background of the religions of the lower culture, and in popular Polytheism there has usually been recognised a God who was stronger and wiser than all, and who also mirrored and to some extent supported the moral ideals of the nation or empire. The idea of the one mighty God is also met with in the henotheistic type of belief, in which the existence of many gods is affirmed, while yet one is worshipped and served to the exclusion of all others. A form of Monotheism was also reached when, as in the religion of Greece and Rome, the many gods of the Pantheon were made completely subject to the king of gods and men. And God was not left without a nobler witness. A lofty ethical Theism was proclaimed by many of the poets and the philosophers of Greece and Rome. In the schools of the prophets and of

Jesus Christ the theistic doctrine was perfected, and through them it became a part of the common good of the civilised world.

The theistic doctrine may be summarised in the proposition that there is one God, the infinite personality, eternal and omnipresent, almighty, all-wise, and all-good, the Creator, the Preserver and the Governor of the world. The theistic conception, like the pantheistic, embraces the notes of unity, infinitude and spirituality, but there is the vital difference that spirituality is held to involve, not merely the exercise of one or more of the functions of spirit, but a conscious selfhood, which is the centre of the activities of thought and will along with such aspects of feeling as are compatible with the divine nature. In relation to time God possesses the attributes of eternity and immutability, in relation to space the attributes of immensity or omnipresence. He is not in time in the same way in which finite beings are in time—with a past, a present and a future ; nor is He extended in space after the fashion of a world-aether : the essence of the doctrine is that God is the author of space and time, that the finite point of view is embraced by the divine intelligence, and that in every moment of time and at every point of space He is present to His creatures, holds them under His sway, and makes them partakers of His benefits and liable to His judgments. In power He is infinite, the omnipotent God, to whom all things are possible, save those which involve a contradiction, or which are inconsistent with His holy nature, and He is able to perform all that He wills. As infinite Spirit He is omniscient, possessing a knowledge which is intuitive and simultaneous, and which comprehends Himself and His perfections, all His creatures and all their actions, all things past,

present and future, and all possibilities; and He is also the all-wise, who chooses the best ends, and who for the attainment of these ends employs the most suitable and efficacious means. He is clothed with all moral perfections, which may be summed up in righteousness and love. As righteous He is the just Lawgiver, who requires what is right, and the just Judge, who renders to all their due. Finally, God is love—the prototype as well as the source of all the gracious forms and of all the beneficent and sacrificing ministries whereby love makes its presence known in our world, possessing in perfect degree all that is shadowed forth in the love of fatherhood and in the highest human goodness. And as are the infinite attributes, so are His mighty works. He is the Creator of the world and of all that it contains. His methods have been various, but in the last resort the universe is His creation. What He has made He conserves—upholding the fabric and sustaining the energies of a system which apart from Him would drop back into nothingness. And this world He effectively governs—granting indeed to all creatures, and specially to the creatures He has endowed with reason and conscience, a relatively independent existence, but this on the footing that nothing befalls but by His permission, that the forces of evil are checked and impeded, according to the law 'thus far and no further,' and that all things are overruled by His power and wisdom for the furtherance of His Kingdom of truth and righteousness and love.

D.—There remains the agnostic type of thought which breaks in principle with the other theological types by refusing to construe God in terms of any mode of being that can be defined. By Agnosticism is here understood the doctrine which

affirms that God is, but disclaims any knowledge of what God is. It is thus distinguished from the sceptical Atheism which is unable to affirm, but which also refuses to deny, the existence of God. It is also to be distinguished from the partial Agnosticism met with in all the higher theologies which, while holding that man has a real knowledge of God, yet humbly concedes that he falls far short of comprehending the plenitude of the divine perfections, and the magnitude of the divine works in Creation and Providence. The general agnostic position has been reached from several sides. Materialism has always been found, on deeper reflection, to involve grave difficulties, speculative as well as ethical, and it is not therefore surprising that the dogmatic Materialism of an older generation has been largely replaced by a Naturalism or Positivism which confines its attention to phenomena, and declines to affirm anything either about matter or about God. Pantheism also has tended—and notably in the Hindu Schools—to pass over into a true Agnosticism. That God is, and is the essence of all, it was commonly affirmed, is the truth of truths, but what God is can only be declared by negatives.

> Not in speaking, not by thinking,
> Not by seeing is he apprehended.
> He is: by this word and not otherwise
> Does a man lay hold on God.

'How should he know Him by whom he knows all this? That self is to be described by No, No. He is incomprehensible, for He cannot be comprehended. How, O beloved, should he know the Knower?'[1] The Christian mystic has sometimes testified to the same effect. 'The unity which is superior to minds,' says

[1] Brih. Upanishad, iv. 5, 16, 65.

the Areopagite, 'transcends minds, the unity which transcends the subject is incapable of being made the object of thought, the goodness which is infinite cannot be compared to any other.' [1]

It was on this type of thought that Spencer fastened as that which, while conserving the deepest thought of religion, might also be accepted by Science as a fit tribute to the creative and sustaining power which is so far manifest in the processes of the world, though it is itself clothed with darkness as with a garment.

'Have we not seen,' he says, 'how utterly unable our minds are to form a conception of that which underlies all phenomena? Does it not follow that the Ultimate Cause cannot be conceived because it is in every respect greater than can be conceived? And may we not therefore rightly refrain from assigning to it any attributes whatever, on the ground that such attributes, derived as they must be from our own natures, are not elevations but degradations?' . . . 'By continually seeking to know and being continually thrown back with a deepened conviction of the impossibility of knowing, we may keep alive the consciousness that it is alike our highest wisdom and our highest duty to regard that through which all things exist as the unknowable.' [2]

## II

Having examined the ideas which have prevailed about God, we have next to consider their value. And in judging them it has to be borne in mind that ideas have two aspects, and that in each aspect they fall to be tested by different criteria. 'An idea,' says Adamson, 'may be regarded as a natural fact, an occurrence with natural antecedents and consequences. It may also mean the central apprehension in and through any process of the under-

[1] *De Divinis Nominibus*, passim. [2] *First Principles*, [6], 1904, pp. 83, 84.

standing.'[1] In the first point of view an idea is contemplated as an entity which has the same footing in the world of empirical reality as a plant or an animal. In the second point of view the idea is viewed as something which seizes and represents some reality or event of the external or the internal world, and which, according as it succeeds or fails, is declared to be true or false. We may ask if a tree or a flower is true to type, but there is no sense in asking if it is true in the other sense, while this last is the all-important question that is inevitably raised about the mental entity which is known as an idea. We are at present concerned with man's visions of God in their character of mental and historical facts, and as such they may first be tested by the criteria of value that are furnished by the religious idea and the history of religion.

In this respect, as has been said, theological ideas resemble the things of the vegetable kingdom. They have germinated, struck root and grown in the minds of individuals and of societies, they have developed a great variety of forms, they have flourished in profusion and confusion, they have been engaged in a struggle for existence with one another and with the environment, and as the result of this some have withered and died, some have lost ground and are threatened with extinction, and some have gone on from strength to strength, and have spread over the face of the earth. And further, they lend themselves to the same kind of judgment that is passed on species and varieties of plant-life. The plants are valued in accordance with a standard of excellence which is immanent in themselves, and which is chiefly the criterion of utility or serviceableness to mankind,

[1] *The Development of Modern Philosophy*, 1903, i. pp. 113-14.

but also in part aesthetic—embodying the elements of beauty in form and colour which have been observed in the various classes. And the various conceptions of the Divine Being may be similarly valued, according to the measure in which they meet the demands which are made upon God for the satisfaction of man's spiritual life. It is taken for granted, by the believing and the unbelieving alike, that there is some standard of excellence by which worthy and unworthy ideas of God are to be distinguished, and this standard may be somewhat definitely fixed in the light of what we have found to be the fundamental types of religious experience and endeavour. The first and chief criterion is spiritual utility—whether and in what degree a conception of the Divine Being has ascribed to Him the power, the wisdom and the benevolence which are needed as the basis and the guarantee of a substantial salvation. The second is goodness—whether and in what degree a Being proposed as divine is one before whom a moral being can bow in reverence, and in whose behests his conscience can acquiesce. The third is beauty—whether and in what degree the Divine Being is resplendent with qualities that take captive the heart, and win from it the tribute of love and devotion. Finally, there is the criterion of light—whether and how far a doctrine of God gives the mental satisfaction of clearly showing forth the Supreme Being, and of making the universe and the human situation seem intelligible in the light of the Lord. Some use has already been made of these criteria in the arrangement of the ideas in each theological series, and it remains to apply it in the comparison of the ideas which have emerged as the mature result in each series. And first of Materialism and

Agnosticism, which as tested by the religious standard are at the bottom of the scale.

1. The religious claims of the materialistic series need not detain us. The Supreme Being of the materialistic system possesses one attribute of divinity —the attribute of immeasurable power; but as it works in blind mechanical fashion, and without any reference to spiritual ends, it makes a mockery of man's highest hopes, and it substitutes for salvation such amount of well-being and happiness as can be extracted out of earthly conditions by the ephemeral visitants of the planet. The materialistic creed further outrages the moral sense by asking us to revere as the Supreme Being a colossus on the sub-ethical plane, while it flouts the religious affections with the vision of a Juggernaut which ruthlessly destroys the children of men, and overwhelms the good and the evil in a common doom. The most that might be claimed is that Materialism brings light into a realm of darkness—a service which religious thought has regarded as an element of the chief good; and that, however painful it may be to accept the situation which the philosophy reveals, it at least gives the opportunity of practising the virtue of submission on which the religious mind has set high store. But the system has proved quite unable to fulfil the promise of intellectual satisfaction which was offered as compensation for the spiritual loss. The material substance which was declared to be the ultimate and permanent reality has turned out to be itself a very elusive and dubious entity. From the empirical standpoint the atoms of Lucretius have been replaced by a succession of atoms of different kinds, and the 'one sole solid in the world' has been melted into mass-points or electrons. From the epistemological side the

knowledge professed by Materialism seems to be highly suspect: matter as known presupposes a knowing mind, and to say that it is also the cause of mind seems as incredible as to say that the son who was begotten by his father was also the progenitor of his father, or that the horse-shoes which have been hammered by the blacksmith on the anvil were also the anterior and superior power that brought the blacksmith into being.

2. The religious value of Agnosticism may not be rated much higher. Spencer's proposal was to end the conflict between Science and Religion by a concordat under which the one should concede the existence of a First Cause, and the other should concede that its nature is unknown and unknowable, but to these overtures it was very naturally replied that this was like purchasing life at the cost of what makes life worth living. There would still remain an Infinite Being to evoke a sentiment of awe, and it would be some gratification to the religious mind to be allowed to pass beyond the things that are seen to a transcendental cause; but causal explanation is only an inconsiderable portion of the blessings which have been expected from communion with God; and in general it may be said that the notion that this conserves the substance of religion could only commend itself to those for whom religion had previously meant little or nothing. The unknown and unknowable God of Agnosticism has indeed been the God of certain mystics, and has supported their piety in secret ways, but to the general mass of mankind it must seem that such a God is little better than a nonentity, and under His reign their spiritual life would certainly languish and wither. The agnostic idea is in conflict with the normal demands of the religious nature, since it is impossible to build upon the unknown the hope of a salvation,

impossible to render obedience to one who has made no clear revelation of His will, and at least very difficult to love when the object is credited with no beauty and goodness that may delight the eye and lay their spell on the heart.

3. Pantheism has made bold religious claims, and has supported them by strong credentials. The organic type of Pantheism, in which the supreme reality is thought to be of the nature of the live thing, is, however, little superior, as tested by the religious standard, to the materialistic doctrine. The higher Pantheism, on the other hand, which affirms that the one real being is of the nature of spirit, offers much in satisfaction of the religious demands. For if it be the case, as Pantheism teaches, that I am a mode or a part of God, there is no need to feel any anxiety about salvation, since I am in possession of it now and eternally, in virtue of my identification with the one Being that truly exists, and before whom all the evils and terrors of the world of appearance are dissipated as a vain show and an empty menace. I can surely reckon, it may be thought, on God doing the best for me, since what He does in and for me He achieves for Himself. But from this boon large deductions fall to be made. The finite personality is destroyed by being merged in God, and it is impossible to set much store on a salvation when no persons properly so-called are left to appropriate it. If Materialism is a rock, Pantheism is a whirlpool; and as Professor Clement Webb has observed, 'if the religious nature will not be content to see its God dashed to pieces on the one, no more will it suffer its own self, which it knows to be God's darling, to be overwhelmed in the other.' [1]

[1] *Group Theories of Religion*, 1916, p. 178.

Nor does the pantheistic doctrine meet the other conditions of the religious criterion. It appeals, indeed, to the sense of obligation, and disposes the soul to utter resignation ; but it provokes the moral nature to protest and revolt since most people find it impossible to pay reverence to a Being that is equally at home in the soul of the saint and of the libertine. If I may well think too highly of myself to consent to be obliterated in God, much more may I think too highly of God to make Him entirely responsible for me. Nor does Pantheism adequately meet the aspirations of the heart. It is true that, as we saw, pantheistic Mysticism is associated with a love of God which could become a veritable intoxication of the soul, but the general mass of mankind have found it beyond their power to love a God who, being impersonal, cannot know and love and truly care. It is evidence of this inadequacy that Pantheism has usually allied itself with Polytheism, and so has provided deities who, notwithstanding their limitations and moral defects, had at least an eye to see, a heart to sympathise, and an arm outstretched to save. Nor does Pantheism satisfy the religious demand for knowledge of God. Its strength, it is often claimed, lies on the intellectual side, and as a fact the pantheistic idea has been the core of some of the great philosophical systems. And it is undeniable that there is an intellectual satisfaction in thinking of the universe and its contents as possessing the unity of a system in which there is one Being only, and in which all that happens is directly referable to the divine causality. There are, however, other systems—for example, Calvinism—which have found it possible to ascribe a real unity to the total scheme of things without the necessity of sacrificing to this ideal the personality of man and the honour of God.

But whatever be the merits of Pantheism on the theoretical side, it at least fails to provide the illuminating conception of God which is demanded by the religious mind. For the pantheistic schools have only been in agreement in their negation of the personality of God and of doctrines which are governed by this conception, and when it has been affirmed that God is Spirit, there has been further controversy, as was observed, as to whether His essence is to think or to will. And in neither case does this idea bring much enlightenment; for while it is easy to grasp the notion of a person who does not think, or of a person who has no will-power, the notion of a process of thought or of a series of volitions without a person to whom they belong is one which may well seem to ordinary persons to be bewildering, if not absurd.

4. There should be little doubt as to the religious pre-eminence of the doctrine of the one God, who is both the Infinite Being and a personal Being, and who in the manner of a self-conscious Being is the almighty, the all-wise and the all-good. If religion be the quest of a salvation, the perfect guarantee of its attainment is given by faith in the God who, as infinite in power, is able to overcome all opposition, to ward off all danger, and to bestow the greatest blessings; who, as infinite in wisdom, can employ effectual means for the accomplishment of His ends; and who, as the all-good, is disposed to use His wisdom and His omnipotence for the highest well-being of His creation and of the children of men. He can be wholly revered, since He possesses all moral perfections; and since His will is a holy and loving will, His laws can be obeyed with all the energy of the moral nature, while the hard task of resignation is made easier by the assurance of His goodness. And

love has naturally been interwoven with reverence and obedience. Theism, finally, has undertaken, as no other theology has done, to enrich the religious mind with treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. While Materialism, though claiming real knowledge of the Supreme Being, robs Him of the character of God, while Agnosticism professes invincible ignorance, and Pantheism is at odds with itself, it has been generally characteristic of the theistic school that it has propounded to the world an elaborate doctrine of the being, the attributes and the works of God that was at once luminous and coherent. And it is to be observed that the criteria have been most fully satisfied by the form which the theistic doctrine has assumed in the Christian system. For Christianity not only re-published as axiomatic the doctrine of the infinite attributes which is the foundation of the hopes of salvation, but it gave new views of the wondrous ways of God in history which deepened man's confidence in His wisdom, while by the proclamation of the incarnation of God in Christ it deepened the confidence in His love. Moreover, ever since God was seen and worshipped in Christ it has been made easier for men to cast their lives in the moulds of duty to the holy God, while with the vision of the God of self-sacrificing love and of unmerited grace it was made possible even for the commonplace soul to love the God of the infinite attributes with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and with all the mind. And lastly, the religious demand for a satisfying knowledge of God has been uniquely met in the religion which was enriched by the self-disclosure of God in Christ, and which in its Theology has set forth a systematic body of doctrine concerning the being, the purposes and the ways of the Infinite God. It may, indeed, be

thought that the doctrine of the Trinity involved Theism in difficulties, and that instead of enlightening the general mind it laid on it the burden of an impenetrable mystery ; but there are aspects of the doctrine, notably the divinity of Christ, which are full of light to the popular mind, while to the Christian gnostic it may well seem to be a great addition to his knowledge to believe that God has an adequate object which he eternally knows and loves because of the subsistence in the unity of the Godhead of the distinctions of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

The judgment that the theistic doctrine best meets the religious wants of man is supported by the preponderant testimony of the human race. A Theism of a rudimentary type is commonly met with as an alternative to the idolatrous faiths of the animistic culture ; in more developed form it has been the latent theology of multitudes who acknowledged the many Gods of the polytheistic systems ; and it has been the core of the teaching of the religions which have entered into the main stream of the history of the race during the last two thousand years. In its Mohammedan form it gave a creed, an ideal, and religious enthusiasm to dominant races of Asia and Africa ; and in its Christian form it took captive the mind of the Western world, was professed by the nations which assumed the leadership in the march of civilisation, and was accompanied by the corroborative signs of the deepening and the enrichment of the moral life. It is true that India has on the whole stood sponsor for the pantheistic doctrine, but it has also had its succession of theological schools which have resolutely reaffirmed the personality and the moral attributes of the Infinite Being ; and it may be conjectured that if the Christian Church as a whole had had the same

confidence as Augustine and Calvin in the sovereignty of God, and had put in the forefront the doctrine of the divine decrees, and of the entire dependence of man for salvation on the prevenient and irresistible grace of God, it would have made much greater progress than has been so far achieved in the conversion of India to the Christian faith.

We have thus passed in review man's visions of God, and we have given reasons for holding the theistic doctrine to be the best after its kind in respect of spiritual utility, goodness, beauty, and luminousness. And it is at the least probable that all of the ideas about God have had some value, and that the idea which has emerged as the greatest must have been of the highest value. But ideas, as was observed, are distinguished from mere biological entities by the circumstance that they take hold of the world or of parts of it in a peculiar way which gives them the characters of truth and falsehood; and there is a *prima facie* probability that a mental fact which has indubitable excellences of the utilitarian, aesthetic and ethical order has also a title to respect in the intellectual or theoretical aspect. That any idea of the Divine Being which has found a lodgment in the devout mind, and nourished the spiritual life, should be baseless, and especially that the purest and noblest form of the idea should be utterly false, is a view which seems to me to be ruled out by the unity of the system within which the human race has arisen, and by the unity of the power which is manifest and operative in the general scheme of things. For if it should turn out that an idea has emerged in the historical process which man has been constrained to value as supremely useful, beautiful and good, while yet on testing it by

his powers of reason he was compelled to declare it false, this would mean that the power which has revealed itself in the world is at odds with itself, and that what it has accredited in one way it has laboured to discredit in another. The actual position I rather take to be that the human mind, approaching the question under the impulse of the religious instinct and with the equipment of the religious tendencies, and also as subject to the play of vitalising spiritual energies, came into possession of ideas of the Divine Being which culminated in the sublime theistic conception; and that when reason in the name of Philosophy undertook the examination of the subject, it found indeed matter enough to reject in the imperfections of the lower theological forms, but it also found that the best work had been done, and that its chief work was to reproduce, expand and justify what had been first given to mankind from the religious side in the highest vision of God. In any case it may well be held—as a presupposition of the discussion of the truth of theism—that the doctrine of God which is the richest result of the religious life of the race on the theoretical side, and which has been interwoven with the highest development of the intellectual and the moral life of the race, is entitled to be regarded as true unless and until an overwhelming proof can be offered from the rational side to the effect that it is either self-contradictory or that it comes into collision with some other realm of indisputable reality.

# CHAPTER XI

## THE WAY OF SALVATION

In religion, we have seen, even as man has coveted the highest blessings, so has he hoped to obtain them by the help of the Highest. In every faith, accordingly, there are provisions which are directed to the establishment of friendly relations with the divine powers on which man feels himself dependent for protection and blessing. The lower religions have sacred rites which serve this purpose, and the higher religions have their scheme of the conditions of salvation and of auxiliary means of grace. A doctrine of the means of salvation has in fact been fundamental in every great religious movement. The S.O.S. call of humanity has been, as Bosanquet says, 'What must I do to be saved?', and the responses were naturally discussed with the earnestness of the voyagers who fear that their ship is foundering. A theory of the means of salvation, besides, becomes interwoven with institutional and professional life, and any innovating or reforming doctrine has always had the provocative aspect of a menace to vested interests. It is therefore not surprising that the soteriological issue has been the occasion of some of the fiercest controversies that have convulsed the religious world. And at the outset some account may be given of the four protagonists—viz., the magician, the priest, the prophet and the sage.

The antagonism of the priest and the magician has been dramatically pictured by Sir James Frazer.

'The haughty self-sufficiency of the magician,' he says, 'his arrogant demeanour towards the higher powers, and his unabashed claim to exercise a sway like theirs, could not but revolt the priest, to whom, with his awful sense of the divine majesty, and his humble prostration in presence of it, such claims and such a demeanour must have appeared an impious and blasphemous usurpation of prerogatives that belong to God alone. And sometimes, we may suspect, lower motives concurred to whet the edge of the priest's hostility.'[1]

Doubtless it is true that, as Marett has pointed out, the magician often mixes with his incantations an element of priestly invocation, and gives to his spell the appeal of a prayer. In the post-Vedic development of Indian religion the priest reverted to the compulsory method after he had been taught better, and he applied it with unqualified arrogance to the control of the heavenly powers as well as of the things of earth. 'While in the Vedic Hymns,' says Oldenberg, 'the priest had implored the help of the gods, in the later sacrificial code of the Brahmanas he appears in the character, not of the servant of the gods, but of the sorcerer.'[2] In the great religions, however, the distinction has generally been drawn and acted on. The sorcerer has been prosecuted as a social pest or ridiculed as an impostor. And if the priest thought he could lay some constraint on God, it was because he believed, with or without good reason, that God had appointed certain forms, and had annexed promises to their due observance.

The conflict of the priest with the prophet under-

[1] *The Golden Bough*, [3], Part I.; *The Magic Art*, i. p. 226.
[2] *Die Lehre der Upanishaden*, 1915, p. 14.

lies the most important chapters in the history of religion. The two have had enough in common to make co-operation desirable and practicable. They have shared the conviction that the way of access to God is by some form of conciliation, and they have been at one in the endeavour to minister the blessings of salvation to their brethren. Each, moreover, has been debtor to the other. The priest has been dependent on the prophet for enlightenment; and the prophet has been dependent on the priest for organisation and propaganda. The priest has had the credit of giving currency to as much of a prophetic message as he was able to appreciate, and of introducing it as a leaven into the life of communities. In the history of Israel the characteristic contributions of the two classes were eventually combined in a larger synthesis, and in the collection which finally received the canonical stamp the writings of Amos and Isaiah came to equal honour with the Priestly Code. A similar working synthesis was effected by the medieval Church, and more recently by the comprehensive Church of England. At the same time the differences between the two types of mind have been somewhat radical. In some periods the distinction has been that the priest knew no religion but ritual, and the prophet none but righteousness. In the higher religions the priesthood has made itself the guardian of morals as well as of worship, but it has been identified with commonplace morality, while the prophets have dared to revise and heighten the ideal. The prophet has stood for the categorical imperative, while the priest has felt bound to consider the adaptation of a doctrine to the capacities and limitations of human nature, and to pay regard to practical consequences as the criterion of the good. Finally, a priest-

hood is constitutionally conservative, and while this has its advantages it has also disposed it to resist the truth when it appeared with the character of novelty. The Old Testament priesthood did not really feel at ease with the prophets until they were in their graves and it had taken over the duty of administering the prophetic legacy. And the pact was suspended when the later Jewish Church had to do with Him who was the last of the prophets as well as the burden of prophecy. The enmity against Jesus is doubtless explained in part by the fact that the darkness hates the light, but it would appear that the most resolute and merciless of His adversaries were actuated by the belief that His teaching was unsound and prejudicial to morality. For the accepted theory was that the man who would please God must live a holy and righteous life; and when Jesus proclaimed the forgiveness of sins to all who should repent and trust in the mercy of the Heavenly Father, and when further He flouted recognised rules of sanctity by companying with disreputable folk, it is not wonderful that good and safe men should have been suspicious and indignant. Nor were they conciliated by the fact that in another way Jesus raised the demands of the Law, for the requirement of the pure heart and of the passive virtues could seem to prejudice the moral code by making it impracticable. The Reformation was due to the dispute between a prophetic school and an essentially sacerdotal organisation concerning the content of the Christian salvation and the terms on which it is to be appropriated. When Luther appeared at the Diet of Worms, he said that the matters in question were the greatest in the world—to wit, the Word of God and the salvation of souls; and in the Augsburg Confession the soteriological

article of justification by faith was put in the forefront as the essence of the Christian revelation. The Roman Catholic Church formulated its alternative doctrine in the Decrees of the Council of Trent, and launched its anathemas against the gainsayers. And the tumult and the strife become entirely intelligible when it is considered that the two great questions at issue were how the sinner may hope to be forgiven, and how a bad man is to be made good, and further, that the Protestant doctrine had a polemical bearing on satisfactions and indulgences which made it tantamount to a proposal for the partial disendowment of the Church.

The collision of the sage with the priest has been a feature of more than one famous period. For the sage, contemplation is the chief means of blessing, and he has therefore been disposed to reject the external forms of religion. This attitude was represented in ancient India by saintly thinkers of the Upanishads, and again in the Hellenic age of reason. During the Christian era the relations have altered more than once. In the first phase, which prevailed in the Middle Ages, it may be said that the sage was in the custody of the priest. Following upon the Reformation he was allowed to cultivate Science and Philosophy, without being held responsible to an ecclesiastical tribunal. In the third phase he has on occasion claimed the custody both of the priest and of the prophet, giving his opinion freely as to the things of the priesthood, and embodying in philosophies of religion only as much as he conceived to be true in the teachings of the prophets. But on the whole the sage has been conciliatory. He has not much cared for the office of the reformer, and the greatest of the modern masters set the example of looking for a rational kernel

in every dogma, if not for edification in every practice, that has won general acceptance.

The conception of knowledge as a means of salvation, or as itself salvation, has already been discussed and in the present context we shall confine our attention to the practical forms of appeal to the Divine Being. The methods have been four, which may be distinguished as the way of coercion, the way of ingratiation, the way of obedience and the way of faith.

## I

The way of coercion had much to commend it to the natural man as a likely method of procuring benefits from the higher powers. For there are many situations in which the human being gets what he wants simply by insisting on getting it. The infant confidently makes demands for the supply of its wants, which as a rule are promptly and liberally complied with ; and its first theory doubtless is that its puny will controls the order of things in which it finds itself alive. And the method of constraint continues to accomplish a great deal in the business of the later years. It is by the method of force, aided by the prudence which is another form of power, that the individual carries out many of the plans by which he advances his material and temporal interests. Not least is this the experience of the savage : he has to make or to steal things—as raiment, tools and weapons —if he is not to go without them ; he has to put forth his strength and his cunning in hunting his prey and fighting his enemies ; and it is by force that he manages his wives, his children and his slaves. King Richard, accustomed to find that his word was law, ordered the

earth to withhold her sweet comforts from his enemies, and assail them with her poisons.[1] It was therefore not unnatural to think that a Divine Being also might be concussed into the service of man.

At a low stage man has hoped to bring some pressure to bear on the supernatural powers by the use of ordinary methods. On occasion he has pitted himself against them, and has sought to overpower them by force or to circumvent them by craft. Under Polydaemonism there are many practices which have the purpose of deceiving and outwitting the ghosts and demons. Care is taken to withhold information from evil-minded spirits, and to mislead them by false information. It has been the custom of some tribes to keep a day of mourning on the occasion of a birth, and this has been thought to be the confession of a pessimistic philosophy, but the better explanation is that it has been deemed prudent to conceal from envious spirits the real state of the parental feelings. The offensive measures undertaken against supernatural beings have been of almost every kind that is suggested by mundane experience. The simplest plan was to chastise the fetish in which a spirit had its lodging. When the venerated spirits were supposed to be dependent on offerings for necessaries and comforts, the economic sanction could be applied and an attempt made to starve them into submission. And it could proceed to actual fighting. When a babe is being born in an African kraal, an armed warrior may be found stationed at the door of the hut with a view to keep at bay the swarming spirits that seek the young child's life. It is an old and widespread idea that an eclipse is due to the attack of a demon on the sun or the moon, and it has often been sought to intimidate the monster by

[1] *King Richard II.*, Act III. Scene ii.

shouting battle-cries, brandishing weapons and discharging arrows.[1] Orestes received from Apollo a bow with which to fight the Erinyes. And we hear of a King of Nepaul who, incensed at the sickness and death of a beloved queen, mobilised his army, brought his artillery into action, and continued the cannonade 'until not a vestige of the deities remained.'

As the child orders its parents about long before it has any inkling of the philosophy and the machinery of fairy tales, it may be that in the infancy of the race reliance was placed on ordinary methods for influencing the higher powers before there was any theory and practice of magic. But, if so, many must have grown sceptical. For the spirits were invisible—not being really identical with the fetish; they were not easily approachable; and it was difficult to be certain that the measures taken in regard to them really reached their objective. It must therefore have been a welcome hypothesis that there was a mysterious force by which, provided he could control it, man might make his will prevail beyond the range of his arm and of his wit. This need was met by some doctrine of *mana*, and it was exploited by the art of magic.

The means employed in magical practice were of two types—the magical word, commonly known as the spell, and the magical art, which may conveniently be called the charm. They could be used separately, but they were often combined as natural complements, or with a view to greater efficacy. The oral

[1] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*,[2], 1903, i. pp. 328 ff. The idea of the hostile demonstration no doubt was influenced by the theory of sympathetic magic.

[2] Quoted by Spencer, *Sociology*,[13], 1887, p. 302.

rite was felt to be highly charged with the mysterious energy. 'The uttered *must*,' as Marett observes, 'is the very type of a spiritual projectile, for nothing initiates an imperative more cleanly, cutting it away from the formative matrix of thought and launching it on its free career, than the spoken word, and nothing finds its way home to another's mind more sharply.'[1] The manual rites were devised to operate in various ways. They were chiefly based on the theory of sympathetic magic, and have been classified by Frazer under the two heads of homoeopathic or imitative magic, and contagious magic. The principle of homoeopathic magic is that like produces like—as in 'the attempt to injure or destroy an enemy by injuring or destroying an image of him.' The principle of contagious magic is that 'things which have once been conjoined must remain ever afterwards, even when quite dissevered from each other, in such a sympathetic relation that whatever is done to the one must similarly affect the other.'[2] This is illustrated by the fear of the savage that, if an enemy comes into possession of a portion of his person, such as a lock of his hair, or even his photograph, he can subject him to his malicious will.

The spell and the charm when applied to divine objects acquired the dignity of religious rites. The religious consciousness has always been specially sensitive to the power of 'the spiritual projectile.' If at its highest Theology could find no greater name than the Word for the instrument of God in Creation and Providence, it is not surprising that the word of the sorcerer was deemed the very quintessence, as well as the vehicle, of his compelling power. The manual

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

[2] *The Golden Bough* (abridged), chap. iii., 'Sympathetic Magic.'

rites used to influence divine powers were based on the ideas of imitation and of contact. The imitative method is exemplified by the Chinaman who in sweeping out his house gives it the character of a ritualistic act, adding, 'Let the devil of poverty depart,' and by the South Sea Islander who launches the disease-boat, crying, 'O sickness, go from here.'[1] The idol at least provided the worshipper with something connected with the divine object on which he could operate, and for the same reason it has been supposed that to know the name of a Divinity was to acquire power over him. Though the original motive of sacrifice can only be guessed, there was a stage at which it was construed as procuring a divine presence and extorting a divine blessing after the manner of a charm. As to how it effected the union different ideas have prevailed.[2] To the Totemist it has seemed that the end could be achieved in a direct and thorough fashion by what Frazer calls 'eating the god.' It is an article of the savage philosophy that the strength, the courage and the wisdom of the creatures are appropriated by devouring them, and it was a natural corollary that by slaying and eating objects of its sacred species the tribe was able to increase its vitality and to augment its powers. With higher ideas of the Divine Being the magical interpretation took a more refined turn—as that a God and his worshippers met at the same table, and that the elements of the meal knit them together in vital union. Apart from this circle of ideas it was doubtless felt that blood—the sight of which sends an unwonted thrill through the human frame—was itself an utterly uncanny thing, which

[1] *Golden Bough*,[3], pp. 83 ff.

[2] Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*; Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*, 1896, pp. 118 ff.

was the very substance of life, and which could be reckoned on to stir and sway the powers above, even as on earth it cast over things a mantle of holiness, or spread among them an infection of uncleanness.

In the religious field magic has been used for two purposes—first and chiefly, to overpower, restrain and counteract the evil-minded or capricious beings that were regarded as the source of sickness, death and other ills ; and secondly, to gain protection and blessing from those that might be indifferent. Under Animism use is made of the spell and the charm in fighting the spirits. The religion of Babylonia had its magical texts which enabled the priests ' to control and exorcise, or in some way to break the malign influence of the ghosts of the dead, gruesome spirits, half-human or half-demon, and fiends and devils.' [1] The same ideas governed the popular religion of Egypt. Even the devout worshipper of the Vedic Age could hope to get Indra into his power, ' as the hunter runs down his quarry or the fowler takes the bird in his snare,' [2] and in the later period the popular faith could be summed up in this creed—' the whole universe is subject to the gods, the gods are subject to the spells, the spells are subject to the Brahmans, therefore the Brahmans are our gods.' [3] The lofty Scandinavian mythology had a magical framework: Wodan was himself the mightiest of the wizards, and the gods of Valhalla could be deceived and baffled by spells that were woven by the powers of darkness and their initiates. While our knowledge of Celtic religion is disappointingly meagre, one assured fact is that ' the

[1] King, art. ' Babylonian Magic ' in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.*

[2] Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

[3] Monier-Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, 1883, p. 201.

method of dealing with the troublesome spirits and with the unseen world generally was by means of magic formulas and incantations.' [1]

II

The second method, if it may be so termed without prejudice, was the way of ingratiation. The term seems suitable to embrace the rites which have been thought to bring the worshipper within the sphere of divine grace. As a member of society man is subject to severe restrictions, and the general experience is that well-being depends less on force than on the cultivation of sympathetic relations with one's fellow-creatures. Throughout the pilgrimage from the cradle to the grave we are dependent on the ministrations of others for the supply of our wants; and measures which may be entirely consistent with self-respect, but which may also sink to sycophancy and servility, are being constantly taken with a view to bespeak the good will of our fellow-creatures. And this has its parallel in the means that have been taken to conciliate the divine powers. The chief means have been the prayer, the offering and the sacrament. These rites are based on ideas which are natural and legitimate. And if at the lowest they can be called blandishments, when spiritualised they have been sovereign means of grace.

1. The most obvious step to take in seeking some boon is to ask for it. The request may be felt to create some obligation to comply with it, and it may also be necessary in order to make a want known. It is thus that the child argues, and a friend incurs the reproach of a friend for neglecting to inform him of his needs. And so

[1] W. J. Watson, 'The Celtic Church and Paganism,' *The Celtic Review*, 1915.

man has felt in regard to the petition and the intercession. The other kinds of prayer are rooted in higher motives, but they could also serve to strengthen the appeal of the petition. In adoration and thanksgiving the worshipper exhibits the heartfelt devotion that bespeaks the favour and the good offices of the benefactor. In confession the petitions are reinforced by the appeal of humility.[1]

2. The offering is a natural accompaniment of the application for help. The gift plays many parts in life: it can have the base use of a bribe, and the sordid use of a *quid pro quo*, but it can also have the gracious use of the token of affection or reverence, and the disinterested character of a sympathetic response to poverty or suffering. And religion at its various stages —alike when man has thought meanly, and when he has thought sublimely, about the objects of faith—has seen reason to incorporate the offering in the dealings with the Divine Being. For this purpose the sacrifice has been widely employed. It is certain that the gift-theory has filled a large space in religious thought from Animism upward to Polytheism, and that with the help of a spiritual interpretation it was enabled to survive the downfall of Polytheism. The savage who believed that a dead chief or father was still alive and near would be disposed to do what was in his power to relieve their distress by suitable presents—and this both because he was sorry for them, and because he desired to be on friendly terms with them. The polytheist has generally conceived of the sacrifice as a gift to the gods, which might be expected to be well repaid. 'Accept these offerings,' so the appeal to a

[1] As this preliminary reference to prayer is very slight, I may refer to my detailed study of the great subject in an essay in *The Power of Prayer*, 1917.

divinity often runs in the Vedas, 'and then apply thy mind to bestowing upon us an abundant recompense.' The currency of the idea among the Hebrews appears from the fact that sacrifice bore the name of a gift.

3. The third way of procuring the good will of a benefactor is to become so closely identified with him as to be in a manner a part of himself. So the king may think of his subjects, the master of his servant, the kinsman of his kinsmen, the father of his children, the husband of her who is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Similarly there is a class of sacred rites which have been based on the idea that God bears a peculiar favour towards His own, and which have been directed to uniting man and God by a special tie. These rites, which may be called sacraments, are distinguished by the different degrees of intimacy which it has been sought to establish between man and God. The removal of disqualifications could be attempted by rites of purification. In this connection sacrifice has served two functions: the sacrificial blood has been supposed to convey a holy character, and the expiatory sacrifice has been supposed to remove obstacles which prevented or interrupted communion with God. A closer degree of intimacy is represented by the claim of Israel to the status of chosen people, which was recorded to have been constituted by the peculiar sacramental rite of a covenant-sacrifice (Ex. xxiv. 6). Another degree was represented by the special title to the divine favour which was claimed by the Israelite in that he was of the circumcision, and thus wore God's badge. A closer form of union was aimed at in the peace-offering which expressly invited the presence of the divine

guest, provided the forms of a mystic fellowship, and cemented the union of the worshippers and the worshipped by the gracious influences of the table-bond. The highest conceivable form is the achievement of essential union with the Divine Being, and this has been sought, both on very low and on very high levels, by partaking sacramentally of a divine food.

III

The third of the capital theories is the way of moral obedience. This doctrine also could be suggested by familiar experience. The child soon discovers that if he is to be on the best terms with his superiors he must do what he is told; while in the relations of master and servant, the most important consideration is the efficiency with which the underling does his work, and his faithfulness in the things which have been committed to his trust. And when man has believed in supernatural powers akin to himself, it must have seemed probable that a condition of pleasing them was to do what they enjoined, and to leave undone what they forbade.

The requirements of the higher powers have usually been understood to include some measure of good conduct. Animism is on the whole indifferent to morality, and it does much to foster sensuality and cruelty, but it has commonly been believed that ancestral spirits resent departures from the good customs of the fathers, and give their support to the ethical code of a tribe. The Polytheism of antiquity was far from treating conduct as irrelevant to piety. The Egyptian mind was even obsessed by the idea of a future state of rewards and punishments. The divinities of the Vedas and of the Sagas were very

imperfect characters, and the honour of Olympus was deeply stained by earthly passions and vices, but the greater Gods had at least the virtues of the warrior and the statesman, and in their official capacity they acted as guardians of the moral and social order.

The universal religions, and also the great national religions, have included in their message a high moral ideal, and have lent the weight of their authority, with the addition of special sanctions, for the enforcement of ethical demands. Under Brahmanism the tendency of the pantheist was to lay the greater stress on the efficacy of meditation, of the theist on the necessity of good works, but it may be said that an earnest attempt was made by both to join religion and morality in a vital union. To each caste there was prescribed a moral code which was worked out in minute detail, while a powerful sanction was added from the doctrine of metempsychosis, which gave promise that every good action would bear good fruit, and that every sin would eventually come home to roost. It was also argued that if obedience was pleasing to God, extra-obedience must be doubly pleasing, and thus one might surely hope 'to merit Heaven by making earth a Hell.' The Buddha enjoined the mode of life which comprehends the cardinal virtues, and is beautified by self-denying graces. So the requirements were presented in the popular message :

> To cease from all wrong-doing,
> To get virtue,
> To cleanse one's own heart,
> This is the religion of the Buddha.

Five commandments were made obligatory upon every Buddhist :

> One should not destroy life.
> One should not take that which is not given.

One should not tell lies.
One should not become a drinker of intoxicating liquors.
One should refrain from unlawful sexual intercourse.

It was added that a man should maintain his father and mother in a just manner, and should practise a just trade. Three additional precepts which exemplified the simple life were recommended to the pious layman :

One should not eat unseasonable food at nights.
One should not wear garlands or use perfumes.
One should not sleep on a mat spread on the ground.

Religion and morality were brought by the Hebrew prophets into the closest and most solemn alliance. Micah gave its classic formulation to the way of obedience : 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God? . . . He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' (vi. 6-8). The virtues on which the prophets chiefly insisted were temperance, justice and benevolence. The Decalogue was obviously framed for the purpose of making Israel think of good conduct as the chief branch of divine service. Mohammed's message had a similar content ; and if his ethical doctrine was less rich and pure, he made some reparation by his confident proclamation of a future judgment in which God would render to every man according to his works. 'On that day,' he says, 'the Kingdom shall of right belong to the merciful, and the unjust person shall bite his hands for anguish and despair and say, "Oh that I had taken the way of truth with the apostle."'[1]

When moral obedience was thus declared to be an essential condition of salvation, it became a burning

[1] The Koran, chap. xxv.

question as to what was to be made of the ancient forms of ceremonial religion.

1. The central position was that rites without righteousness are useless and worse than useless, but that they have a place and a use in ethical religion. Such was the familiar message of the Hebrew prophets. The nation was laden with iniquity, and its zeal in the matter of religious observances was only an aggravation of its guilt. God, says Isaiah, will have none of their worship. 'Who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts?' (i. 12, 13). Language could be used about prayer which resembled the language of the scoffer—'Is such the fast that I have chosen, to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?' (lviii. 5). Jeremiah made light of the badge that the Israelite wore as God's man. 'Behold the days come,' it was declared, 'that I will punish all them which are circumcised in their uncircumcision, for all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart' (ix. 25, 26). Most of all was the prophet moved to indignation by the sacrifices of the sinful nation. 'The Lord,' said Amos, 'hated and despised their feasts.' Isaiah declared that God was 'full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts,' and bade them 'bring no more vain oblations' (i. 11-13). This invective was not, of course, directed against worship as such. The position of prayer cannot be said to have been seriously threatened, for the prophet has ever wrestled in prayer, and indeed has taught the peoples what to pray for and how to pray. The position of sacrifice was more precarious. In the first instance there were voices which condemned it outright, and when it was tolerated it was depreciated in comparison with prayer. 'Will I eat the flesh of bulls,' said a psalmist, 'or

drink the blood of goats? offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving' (l. 13-14.) It was next valued as itself a form of prayer, by which a man testified homage, gratitude and self-sacrifice, and which could seem to be more expressive than the uttered word. There are traces of this idea in the Old Testament, and it was congenial to the philosophical mind of Philo. It was as a form of prayer that sacrifice was usually defended by the devout Greek in the enlightened age. It was, said Euthyphro, a way of conveying to the gods 'the gifts of reverence, honour and gratitude.'

2. The left wing, as we may call it, of the ethical school took up the ground that the specifically religious exercises are superfluous, and are even injurious to the moral life. In primitive Buddhism, in which the living God was lost to view, prayer and sacrifice were naturally thought to be pointless. In the Upanishads it is intimated that sacrifice is a stupid practice, but that the Devas and the priests, who had their living by the altar, did not wish the truth to be known. How far the philosophical saint could go in mockery may be gathered from the passage cited as 'the udgitha of the dogs':

> Vaka Dalbhya went out to repeat the Veda (in a quiet place). A white (dog) appeared before him, and other dogs gathering round him said to him, 'Sir, sing and get us food, we are hungry.' The white dog said to them, 'Come to me to-morrow morning.' Vaka Dalbhya watched. The dogs came on, holding together, each dog keeping the tail of the preceding dog in his mouth, as the priests do when they are going to sing praises. After they had settled down, they began to say: 'Om, let us eat! Om, let us drink! Om, may the divine Varuna, Pragapati, Savitri, bring us food. Lord of food, bring hither food, bring it, Om!'[1]

[1] Khandogya-Upanishad, *S.B.E.*, i., 1890, p. 21.

The older Hebrew prophets attacked the sacrificial system with arguments which seem those of the abolitionist—as that God had no need of offerings, and that sacrifice had been in abeyance during the wanderings in the wilderness (Amos v. 25). In Greece we are told, sacrifice was regarded as a commercial transaction between gods and men, and Socrates is represented as attacking this view with the familiar weapon of the Old Testament prophet:

> But now will you show me what benefit accrues to the gods from the gifts we give them? What they give us is plain to every one, there is no good thing we have that is not their gift. But what they get from us—how do they benefit from that? [1]

In antiquity the case against ceremonial religion was strengthened by the fact that the central rite was a bloody sacrifice which offended the aesthetic sense, and which could utterly revolt the moral sense by the horrors of human sacrifice. That piety should have been supposed to require the father to give up his daughter to the sacrificial knife was the most impressive point made in the Lucretian indictment of religion. Lucian did not know whether to laugh or to weep at the tragic folly of it all—the festal days, the fervent petitions and vows, the disappointed hopes, and the cost to the deluded mortals.[2]

3. There was also a right wing, in which the sacred rites, and notably sacrifice, came to new and greater honour. The need of a supplement to obedience came to be felt both in Israel and in Greece. The doctrine that the approval of God is to be won by obedience to the moral law is a brave and honest theory which conscientious and self-

[1] *Euthyphro*, 14, 15. [2] *De Sacrificiis.*

respecting men are predisposed to accept. But there are two drawbacks to its efficacy which have been widely and keenly realised. One has been the problem of how to dispose of the guilty past. The nation may be polluted, the individual may have behind him a tale of years that the canker-worm has eaten, or that have been stained with vice and crime; and it has been the obstinate habit of conscience to raise the question whether even if a reformation were effected the culprit would not still be under condemnation and liable to punishment. The second question is whether the future of the penitent will be an improvement on his past. The religious teachers of Israel saw the necessity of a spiritual transformation if a corrupt and stiff-necked people was ever to render a full and acceptable obedience; and the remedy was promised in the Messianic age, when God would give a new heart to Israel, and even pour out His spirit upon all flesh (Joel ii. 28). But in the present the chief emphasis was laid on the necessity of the expiation of guilt. It has been thought a strange inconsistency that while the older prophets disparaged sacrifice, if they did not desire to abolish it, succeeding generations, with the approval of the prophetical school, multiplied the sacrifices, and even made it appear that everything depended, as Wellhausen puts it, on offering the right sacrifice at the right time, in the right place, by the right hands and in the right way. But the truth is that the importance attached to sacrifice in the later period was a natural consequence of the ethical ministry of the prophets; inasmuch as their message produced a deepened sense of the heinousness of sin and a fearful looking-for of judgment, and when the sinner trembled before the menace of the unfulfilled law it may well have

seemed that he had to look to sacrifice—if there was anything to look to at all—to supply what was lacking. As to the manner in which the Old Testament sacrifices were supposed to influence God there has been infinite debate : it is certain that no single theory of the *modus operandi* pervades the whole system, and evidence can be collected in support of several theories ; but it is at least clear that the chief end for which the sacrifices were employed was to cover or expiate the sins of the nation and of individual transgressors, and to make it possible for them to draw near to a holy God.

The moralisation of Hellenic religion had a like sequel in the rise of the Greek Mysteries, in which sacred rites were similarly requisitioned for the satisfaction of deep spiritual needs.[1] Some of the famous mystery-cults, including Mithraism, were of Oriental origin, but the Eleusinian and the Orphic Mysteries were at least revised and enriched by the ethical and religious spirit of Greece. The rites were of the kind to which the general name of sacraments has been given. The common features of the ritual are summarised by Professor Percy Gardner as follows :

> The entry into any of the societies or *θιάσοι* was through certain rites of purification. Sometimes the purification was accomplished by baptism in water ; sometimes there was a more repulsive baptism by blood. The blood-purification of which we hear most was the *taurobolium*. A more ordinary

[1] The invaluable thesaurus of the literary materials is Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, 1829. The reinvestigation of the subject has been undertaken on the basis of archaeological research, interest in it being quickened by the parallels with the Christian sacramental system. P. Gardiner, *The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, 1911 ; H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, 1913. The importance of the Mithra-cult is demonstrated by Cumont, *Textes et monuments figures relatifs aux mystères de Mithra*, 1896-99.

purification was that by the blood of a sacrificed pig. Communion with the deity was accomplished by a sacred meal, such as many societies in Greece celebrated on fixed days at the tombs of founders of families and clans. At Eleusis the drinking of the draught called *κυκεών* was one of the most solemn acts of the festival.[1]

If the Jewish mind dwelt chiefly on the awful penalties of sin, and magnified the sacrifices as the means of atonement, it would seem that the devout Greek mind was rather oppressed by a sense of human weakness and mortality, and was attracted to the mystic rites as the means of vivifying union with a Divine Being. It cannot indeed be said that the Greek mind overlooked the need of expiation. Plato mentions that the stewards of the Orphic Mysteries 'claimed to have a power at command which they procured from heaven, and which enabled them, by sacrifices and incantations performed amid feasting and indulgence, to make amends for any crime committed by the individual himself or by his ancestors.'[2] Tertullian says that the Devil in 'vying with the sacraments of God, baptised some, and promised the putting away of sins by a laver of his own.'[3] But one gets the general impression that what the Greek sought in the Mysteries was rather the establishment of communion with a Divine Being resulting in an infusion of the divine life. The sense of fulness of life can be experienced in many forms, and doubtless there were those, described by Plato as inspired, who found it in spiritual exaltation, while those whom he calls the wand-bearers found it in the externals of the ceremonies and even in the stimulus of the wine-cup.

[1] Art. 'Greek Mysteries,' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*.
[2] *Republic*, A. Davies and Vaughan, 1888, p. 36.
[3] *On Prescription against Heretics*, chap. 40.

'The great step that Orpheus took,' says Miss Harrison, 'was that, while he kept the old Bacchic faith that men might become a god, he altered the conception of what a god was, and he sought to obtain that godhead by totally different means. The grace he sought was, not physical intoxication, but spiritual ecstasy; the means he adopted not drunkenness, but abstinence and rites of purification.'[1]

The fuller life that was sought in the Mysteries by the finer spirits was of the nature of a regeneration. This was prominent in the cult of Dionysius Zagraeus —the god who was said to have been killed by the Titans, and who after his heart had been eaten by Zeus—a sacramental feature of the life of the immortals —was restored to life. The human race, it was taught, was formed of dust of the Titans, into which Zeus breathed the spirit of the martyred divinity, and the rites were supposed to enable a man to throw off the influence of the monstrous ancestry by entering into a vital union with the god to whom he owed the divine part of his being.[2] The symbol of the fish, so widely vouched for in the monumental remains of Orphism, seems to have preached the necessity of regeneration, though it is difficult to be sure of the connection of ideas which made it seem appropriate. The Mysteries specially fostered the hope of immortality; and just as popular Christian thinking has made much more of Heaven than of conversion, so may the initiated fellowship have made much more of the hope of Elysium than of the necessity and the obligations of the new birth. We gather from Plato that Heaven and Hell were pictured with a realism like that of the *Divine Comedy*. 'Those who instituted the Mysteries,' he says, 'teach that whosoever comes to Hades unexpiated and uninitiated shall lie

[1] *Prolegomena to Greek Religion*, 1903. [2] Lobeck, *op. cit.*, i. p. 508.

in the mud, while he that has been purified and initiated will dwell with the gods.' [1]

IV

To the great question, 'What doth the Lord require of thee?' yet another great answer has been given. The theory that the friendship of God may be won by keeping His commandments was open to the objection that the best men feel that they are unable to keep them, and that ordinary people, though usually quite satisfied to be no worse than their neighbours, have moments of insight in which they realise that in many things they offend, and that in all they come short. And as regards the ministry of sacraments, it was very credible that a true atonement and a vital union with God would avail, but it must have been a question whether the rites that were practised were able to fulfil the expectations that were built on them. There was therefore room for a doctrine which would make salvation easier and also more secure, provided always that this could be done without prejudice to the hallowed alliance with morality. And this was offered in the theory which we have called the way of faith.

The principle of the way of faith is to appeal to God by trusting Him. It is taken for granted that He is waiting to be gracious, and salvation is viewed not as a reward that has to be painfully and doubtfully striven for, but as a gift that may be confidently claimed and gratefully accepted. And here again there were persuasive analogies in common experience. It is a condition of success and happiness in life to have the habitude of making

[1] *Phaedo*, 59 *c*.

ventures which are inspired by faith in the rationality and friendliness of the general order of things, in the inherent strength of good causes and the weakness of bad causes, in the nobler side of human nature, and in the possibility of becoming master in some sense of every situation in which a man may find himself. The friend instinctively trusts his friend, and does better to trust him than to bespeak assistance by paying him polite attentions or by placing him under obligations. Especially does faith play a large part in the life of the family. Conjugal love rests on faith. The child lives by faith in the power, the wisdom and the good will of his parents, and in general it is his experience that the parental care works for his welfare and happiness, not as a response to deserts, but rather according to the measure of his wants and his need of help. Whenever, therefore, the Divine Being was believed to be benevolent as well as powerful, it was a probable view that He was willing and waiting to bestow His best gifts, and that nothing is so pleasing to Him as that His children should confidently trust Him and humbly depend on His spontaneous favour.

1. The way of faith was adumbrated in the earlier history of religion. Something of it was seen in Polytheism when the worshipper gave his heart to one of the splendid and gracious divinities. When a Brahmanical saint found salvation in the contemplation of the Infinite Being and, believing that God and the self were one, felt that he was secure against all the menace of apparent evil in time and eternity, he made a venture which, however it may offend a humbler piety, at least ranks as a stupendous act of faith. In the theistic school of Hinduism, and notably in the cult of an incarnated god, the condition

of salvation was *bhâkti*, which is defined as 'an affection fixed upon the Lord'; and this is the soul of Vishnuite Hinduism, which is said to be professed at the present day by one-third of the population of India. Buddhism, as already observed, was accommodated to the popular need and capacity by encouraging loving devotion to the founder as a promising beginning, if not also a short and easy way, to the fulfilment of the terms of deliverance. The Old Testament has a strain of teaching which magnifies grace and faith; and Paul declared that this had been the method of the religion of Israel before the interpolation of the legal system. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. But while the theory of salvation by faith was an appanage of other religions, in Christianity it was made central and vital. The other universal religions share with Christianity the ethical note, Islam shares with it the monotheistic note, but it may be said that its specific difference, which also is its power and glory, is the evangelical note.

It is the general doctrine of the New Testament that faith is the primary condition of the Christian salvation. This faith involved belief, or the assent of the mind, but it was essentially trust in the gracious God who was revealed by Christ, or in the Christ in whom God was revealed. In the teaching of Jesus faith and repentance were commonly joined together as the conditions of entrance into the Kingdom; and repentance could be made more prominent and more appealing, as in the Parables of the Pharisee and the Publican, and of the Prodigal Son. But the greatest promises were made to faith; and faith could also be required as the one thing needful, inasmuch as the change of heart had its root and symbol in the

trustful self-surrender to God. St. Paul lays all the stress on the evangelical aspect in his summary definition of the Christian system—'by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God' (Eph. ii. 8). He conceived of Heathenism as the religion of the rebel, of Judaism as the religion of the servant, of Christianity as the religion of the son. In the Epistle to the Romans he depicted the distress of man as under the dominion of sin, alienated from God and made liable to all the evil that is comprehended in death; declared that the law of duty, instead of giving relief, had brought sin to a head and bred despair; proclaimed as the essence of the gospel that God set forth His Son 'to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, that He might be the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus' (Rom. iii. 25-6); and supported the doctrine of justification by faith by anticipatory testimonies of the Scriptures, by the witness of the Spirit of God with his spirit, and by the evidence of accompanying signs of moral and miraculous power. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews reinforced the Scriptural argument by the reminder that faith had given their family likeness to the heroic figures of the sacred history, and was the secret of their victory over the hostile forces of the world. In the Fourth Gospel everything was made to depend on trusting faith; and the demand was heightened on the intellectual side by the requirement of belief in the doctrine of the Word made flesh, and on the emotional side by the prominence given to the love of the disciple for his Lord.

The doctrine of justification by faith as formulated by St. Paul was the core of the evangelical tradition which passed into the keeping of Ambrose and Augustine, and which was republished with power

at the Reformation. The distinctive positions of the Reformers were that the cardinal religious boon is justification in the sense of acceptance with God and the remission of sins, that the condition of acceptance is a faith which, while involving assent to revealed truth, is essentially an act of self-renouncing trust in the mercy of God in Christ, and that it is through this faith alone that the sinner is justified.

'Also they teach,' says the Augsburg Confession, 'that men cannot be justified (obtain forgiveness and righteousness) before God by their own powers, merits or works, but are justified freely (of grace) for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favour, and their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death hath satisfied for our sins. This faith doth God impute for righteousness before Him.'[1]

In the Thirty-nine Articles the Church of England was definitely made sponsor for the doctrine of Justification *sola fide*, which was regarded in the sixteenth century as the hall-mark of Protestantism.

During the last two centuries the doctrine of justification by faith alone has had a chequered history. It was contemptuously criticised by the Rationalism of the street, which has commonly taken for granted that faith is nothing but assent to a creed, and has found it easy to ridicule the theory that salvation depends entirely on a man's religious opinions. In modern Theology the defence of the doctrine has often been half-hearted, while some influential teachers have thrown over the tenet of *sola fide*, and reverted in principle to the Roman position. Nor can it be said that the modern evangelical pulpit gives to the doctrine the same prominence as the Confessions, and proclaims it with the exultant confidence with which it was preached

[1] Article V.

by Luther as the staple of his sermons, and expounded by Hooker in the *Discourse of Justification*. As an offset to this some philosophers have rediscovered the importance of the theological tenet, and it has been declared to be, in its substance, a supreme contribution to religious and ethical theory. The difficulty of man's spiritual estate, Kant observes, is that on the one hand the only object in which God can take pleasure is the perfect man, and on the other, that perfection is unattainable under earthly conditions and can only be reached as the goal of a long-continued moral development carried over into a future state of existence. If therefore a man is to hope now to please God, it is only by possessing the faith in which God, who sees the end from the beginning, finds the promise and the potency of the perfect life.[1] The Anglo-Hegelian School has made less than Kant of the sinner finding peace with God, but it has magnified the doctrine as marking the difference between the bondage of morality and the freedom and tranquillity of the religious life.

'We cannot be saved as we are,' says Bosanquet; 'we can only be saved by giving ourselves to something in which we remain what we are, and yet enter into something new. Mere morality says, "You ought to be equal to the situation"; religion is different and says, "You can be good though you are not good."'[2]

The same thing had been said in still more emphatic terms by F. H. Bradley:

'You must believe,' he wrote, 'that you are one with the divine, and you must act as if you believed it. In short, you must be justified not by works but by faith. This doctrine which Protestantism to its eternal credit has made its own, and sealed with its blood, is the very centre of Christianity; and

[1] *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft.*

[2] *What Religion Is*, 1923.

when you have not this in one form or another, then Christianity is nothing but a name.'[1]

There are, in truth, strong reasons for holding that the doctrine of justification by faith is the ideal solution of the religious problem of the reconciliation of sinful man with God. It has the qualities of a gospel in that it makes salvation at once easy and assured. While duty is difficult and perfection impossible, it is easy to believe that God is good, and to trust in His pardoning mercy; and a door of hope was thus opened even to such as the woman in the city that was a sinner, and the dying thief on the cross. And if the way of faith proposes easier terms, it also gives a better ground of confidence. 'If thou shouldst mark iniquity, who shall stand?' There is a great mass of humanity which Dante conceived to be undeserving of Hell and unqualified for Purgatory, and which was therefore 'scorned alike by mercy and justice'; and while there are many who may be called good rather than bad, and also a moral élite which the Bible knows as the righteous, these have not as a rule advanced any great claim of merit when they looked on their life in the light of the Lord. Rather has it been felt that it is good to be able to base the confidence, not on one's poor self, but on something divinely perfect—as the mercy of God or the merits of a Saviour with whom the sinner is made one by the living bond of faith. This comfortable aspect of the doctrine was strongly emphasised in the witness of the Reformation.

'This doctrine,' says the Augsburg Confession, 'doth wholly belong to the conflict of a troubled conscience; and cannot be understood, but where the conscience hath felt the conflict.

[1] *Ethical Studies*, 1876, p. 270.

Formerly men's consciences were vexed with the doctrine of works, they did not hear any comfort out of the Gospel. Whereupon conscience drove some into the desert and into monasteries, hoping there to merit grace by a monastical life. Others devised other works whereby to merit grace, and to satisfy for sin. There was very great need, therefore, to teach and renew this doctrine of faith in Christ; to the end that fearful consciences might not want comfort, but might know that grace, and forgiveness of sins, and justification are received by faith in Christ.'[1]

2. But while the doctrine of justification by faith was thus a gospel of consolation, it had also to prove itself propitious to the interests of the moral life. The religion of obedience worked directly and effectively in the interests of morality, and the religion of grace had to take over in full the ethical liabilities. And in particular, Christianity made itself so entirely responsible for morality, that it has been possible to overlook the fact that it is fundamentally a system of redemption, and to think that its sole purpose is to give good advice in the matter of conduct. The moral ideal was raised, and new motives were brought into play. The faith which Jesus required was a decisive act which worked the revolution of a change of heart; while faith in Himself meant that a soul bowed in reverence and devotion before the highest that it had found on earth, and was thus on the way to be filled with the Spirit, and to be remade after the pattern of a higher humanity. Again, Jesus recognised a strain in human nature which can make an astonishing response when a man has been treated with unexpected generosity, and has been made to feel that he is trusted; and He expected those to love much, and to abound in gratitude, who had tasted of the grace

[1] Art. XIX., 'Of Good Works.'

of God in the free forgiveness of the sinner's immeasurable debt. And finally, a pledge for obedience was given in the doctrine of the Last Judgment which taught that the reality of faith would be tested by the fruits of charity which it had borne. The apostolic writers gave the same pledges for the sanctification and the good works of the believer. The change of heart which Jesus associated with faith was described as the miracle of regeneration (2 Cor. v. 11 ; John iii. 3 ff.). The influence of the Master on the disciple took the higher form of the presence of the indwelling Christ, or of the inhabitation of His Spirit, which spontaneously utters itself in love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal. v. 22-23). After his exposition of the content of the great salvation, and its source in the grace of God, Paul felt that gratitude could be reckoned on as the inspiration of a new life ; and he exhorted those who know the mercies of God to present themselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God (Rom. xii. 1). And the warning was added that they which continue to do the works of the flesh shall not inherit the Kingdom of God (Gal. v. 21).

This was a wonderful conception of the basis of character and life—with the notes of originality, profundity and spiritual daring—which was entitled to rank as a masterpiece of ethical genius, if it had not made the higher claim to be revealed truth. But there was ground for apprehension that it would prove to be too high-pitched for common use. The doctrine was rooted in the experiences of a great spiritual epoch ; and it was a question as to how it would work when the Church came to include Christians of every grade, from the saints

and the converts down to the veriest babes in Christ, with the addition of much of the common clay of an unregenerate humanity. In these circumstances a modification seemed to be called for to make it more level to the common intelligence, and also to make Christianity a more effective instrument for the enforcement of the cardinal virtues, and the encouragement of the works of Christian charity. This tendency began among the Jewish Christians, and is in evidence in the Epistle of James; it was confirmed by the Apostolic Fathers, who had learned little in the school of Paul; it was furthered by the Greek Fathers in consonance with their views as to freewill and spiritual ability; it was developed by the practical sense of the medieval Church, and it received its mature formulation and the authoritative stamp from the Council of Trent. It has been charged in Protestant polemics that the motive for the modification was the aggrandisement of the priesthood and the enrichment of the Church, but it would be nearer the truth to say that the Roman Catholic Church—paradoxical as it sounds—took the rationalistic line of attempting to effect an improvement on Christianity which was suggested by common sense as likely to increase its influence on morals. The leading idea of the modified scheme was to appeal more effectually to self-interest by making it more obviously to the advantage of the Christian to perform particular duties, and more obviously to his detriment to commit particular sins. Loyalty was indeed still professed to the doctrine of faith and grace:

'We are justified by faith,' it was declared, 'because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and the root of all justification, without which it is impossible to please God, and to come into the fellowship of His sons; but we are

therefore said to be justified freely because none of those things which precede justification, whether faith or works, merit the grace of justification.'[1]

There was, however, a marked change in the proportion of doctrine. Faith was reduced to intellectual assent—the 'believing those things to be true which God has revealed and promised'—and a faith of the kind which can be credited to the devils necessarily dropped into a secondary position as the means of salvation. Justification was held to be 'not remission of sins merely, but also the sanctification and renewal of the inner man'; in both aspects it was declared to be progressively attained; and the extent to which the remission of sins was granted was made to be dependent on the extent to which the sinner had become just and had performed good works. In the sacrament of baptism he received the instalment of justification called the first robe, and that on terms of pure grace; but after 'the shipwreck of grace lost' he had a 'second plank' to cling to—to wit, 'the sacramental confession of the said sins, sacerdotal absolution, and likewise satisfaction by fasts, alms, prayers and the other pious exercises of the spiritual life.'[2] The scheme was rounded off by the doctrine of Purgatory, which provided a sphere in which, prior to the attainment of the perfected bliss of Heaven, rewards and punishments could be meted out with the most discriminating and rigorous justice.

'If any one saith that, after the grace of justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted, and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out in such wise that there remains not any debt of temporal punishment

[1] *Decrees of the Council of Trent:* 'Of Justification,' viii.
[2] *Ibid.*, xiv.

to be discharged either in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven can be opened (to him), let him be anathema.' [1]

The Reformers, on the other hand, were content to rely for moral results on the dynamic forces which attended on the experience of justification by faith.

'Ours teach,' says the Augsburg Confession, 'that it is necessary to do good works, not that we may trust that we deserve grace by them, but because it is the will of God that we should do them. And because the Holy Ghost is received, our hearts are now renewed, and so put on new affections, so that they are able to bring forth good works.' [2]

The Westminster Confession sums up the motives as follows :

Good works are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith, and by them believers manifest their gratitude, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the Gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are in Christ Jesus, that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.[3]

When tested by the religious criterion the Protestant gospel of justification by faith seems to be superior to the modified form of justification by works which has been elaborated in Roman Catholicism. It promises an unmutilated salvation, it offers the full and immediate possession of the greatest things in the Christian salvation, and it gives the more solid ground of assurance in that the penitent sinner is bidden to put aside all thoughts of his own poor merits and strivings, and to build his hopes on the perfections and the mercies of God. As tested by

[1] *Of Justification*, Canon XXX.
[2] Art. XX., 'Apology,' chap. iii. [3] Chap. xvi., 'Of Good Works.'

the ethical criterion, both systems have had a large measure of success and of failure. Under the Roman Catholic scheme the sinner may be said to be put on probation and paid by results ; under the Protestant scheme he is treated with magnanimity, and put on his honour to make a due return ; and as in the affairs of this world, so in the spiritual sphere, one method has produced the more satisfactory results with one class of persons and the other with another class. The Roman Catholic Church has exercised an extensive and penetrating influence on conduct by means of its definite scheme of threatened penalties for evil-doing, and of promised recompense according to effort and desert. No doubt the heroic virtues of its saints are rather to be set down to motives of love and gratitude, reverence and loyalty ; but the specific features of the system appealed to the general body of the Christian society, which it fortified against the more heinous sins of the flesh and of the spirit, while it gave a notable stimulus to works of mercy. It is also observable that the Roman Catholic Church—and this doubtless because of the adaptation of its doctrine to elemental modes of thought—wields considerable influence among the derelict masses at the bottom of the social and intellectual scale in the modern civilised world. Of the Protestant system it may be said in general that it has not been so widely or directly influential, but that where it has succeeded the results have been better. It has had its failures. In the Protestant lands there is a great multitude which is as sheep without a shepherd, which seems to owe nothing to the Church, and which has the vaguest ideas as to what it asks it to believe and to do. The chief Protestant Churches, further, contain a large proportion of members and adherents who have no comprehension of the distinctive gospel of the

Reformation, and who in any case have not the spiritual experience which is needed to ensure the due response of gratitude and of consecrated service. On the other hand, it is matter of history and observation that the evangelical message has moulded a type of character which has well justified the expectations of the Reformers. The good Protestant type has not been inferior to the good Catholic type in heartfelt piety, it has at least equalled its liberality in the support of philanthropic enterprises and of Christian Missions, and it has surpassed it in the spontaneity and robustness of its ordinary morality, and in its services to society in the economic sphere. There has, moreover, been a great indirect contribution to the moral life of the Protestant peoples from the religious philosophy of justification and sanctification; for it established a point of view and diffused a spirit which became in large measure common property in the form of the greater trustworthiness of conscience, the sense of duty for duty's sake in the matter of purity, truth and honesty, the recognition of the importance of the home and calling as spheres of the highest service, and the disinterested response to the cry of suffering and wrong. Probably also it is because England had a Reformation and a Puritan period that its literature has been much cleaner than that of France. And these things make a large offset to the restraints that have been imposed on the sinful heart by the menaces of Purgatory.

3. The second great problem was what the religion of faith was to make of the hallowed forms which piety had used as the means of communion with God. When justification by faith has dominated religious thought the chief value has naturally been ascribed to the means which imparts knowledge of the God in whom the sinner is invited to trust. So the Shorter Catechism gives

the first place to the Word in the list of the means of grace, and declares that 'the Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.' As regards prayer, the evangelical scheme at many points reinforced the view that it is a solemn duty and a high privilege. For prayer is both a fruit of faith and an aid to faith. He who has faith is moved to adore, to confess, to supplicate and to intercede, while, on the other hand, he prays that his faith may be increased. The offering has been easily incorporated in the Christian system in a variety of forms—as the prayer of thanksgiving, the contribution to the treasury of the temple, and above all the giving of the self, and the service of the dedicated life. The chief question has been as to the place and use in Christianity of the institution of sacrifice, and of sacramental ordinances.

(*a*) Sacrifice was abolished in one way in Christianity, but in another it was conserved, and it was even entrenched at the centre of Christian Theology in the form of the doctrine of the atonement. The interpretation of the death of Christ as a sacrifice is common to every type of New Testament teaching; and while the prominence of the sacrificial idea was partly due to the apologetic necessity of expounding the Christian message in the contemporary modes of thought, there was also felt to be a religious necessity arising out of the sense of human guilt and weakness. For this a remedy had been sought, it was observed, in certain sacred rites, notably of the sacrificial kind, as the means of expiation and vivification, and the death of Christ was set forth as the

sacrifice by which those ends had been perfectly and securely attained. The conception of the Passion of Christ as a piacular sacrifice was emphasised by the Latin fathers; it was developed, with the governing idea of sin as debt, in the Anselmic theory of the Atonement; and it was embodied as the theory of penal substitution in the orthodox systems of the Lutheran and Reformed Schools. The necessity of the renewal of human nature through contact with the divine is the central thought of the famous treatise of Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, and it was doubtless in his mind that those of his race who had sought life in the Mysteries would find all and more than all that they had sought in the incarnate Logos. Abelard attributed the efficacy of the sacrifice to its power to kindle in the breast of the sinner the flame of divine and selfless love from the heart of the Crucified. Modern Theology has tended to magnify the quickening power of the great sacrifice, rather than its expiatory virtue, and it has had good reason for the change of emphasis. It was no doubt made easier for the repentant sinner to trust God for the forgiveness of sins when he believed that Christ had suffered a merited punishment in his room; but the assumption on which the doctrine of penal substitution was based, viz., that the nature of God makes it impossible for Him to forgive sins without a satisfaction of vindicative justice, is an unproved and unprovable hypothesis. On the other hand, it is incontestably true that sinful man needs to be renewed in heart and mind; and it is an indubitable fact of history that the Christ who was lifted up on the Cross has drawn all men to Him, and that a virtue has gone forth from His sacrifice for the quickening of dead souls, and for the healing of the nations. And it may be said that the sacrifice of Christ—of which the matter is

God manifest in the flesh, and the action that of the faith which lays hold on the divine in the sacrifice—is the Christian sacrament proper, which has fulfilled the ancient and deep-seated hope of participation in the divine life through some form of union with the divine. 'Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify it—*hoc est magnum sacramentum*' (Eph. v. 25 ff.).

(*b*) There are in addition two sacraments in the narrower sense, which have been observed as an institution of Christ since the apostolic age, and there has been much conflict of opinion as to their place and use in the economy of the Christian salvation. Three main positions have been taken up in accordance with the law of changing valuation which was already observed as governing the ecclesiastical administration of its spiritual deposits.

In a Theology governed by the doctrine of justification by faith the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper have an obvious place and a useful function. If faith be the condition, and the sole condition, of acceptance with God and the remission of sins, and also of the benefits which flow from these, the sacraments are needed to guide and strengthen faith. And this has been the general doctrine of evangelical Christianity. Calvin wrote much which darkened counsel as to the issues in the sacramental controversies, but he has stated this central principle with perfect clearness. 'A sacrament,' he says, 'is an external sign, whereby God represents and testifies His good will to us, in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, which is so weak and exiguous that, unless it is under-propped and buttressed, it is liable to waver and totter.'[1]

[1] *Institutio*, iv. 14.

The support, it was held, was given in two ways: the sacraments represented to the mind the essential truths and provisions of the gospel, and they were attestations or seals of its divine origin and trustworthiness. And in making the sacraments auxiliary to faith the Reformers reverted to the proportion of doctrine as it is in the New Testament. If they do the work of faith we need another New Testament than that which contains the record of the teaching ministry of Jesus, the Epistles to the Galatians and the Romans, and the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John.

The stage of exaggeration was represented by the Roman Catholic development of the doctrine of the sacraments. The exaggeration took place along two lines. They were regarded, in the first place, as effecting an extension and continuation of the incarnation and of the sacrifice of Christ. He was in a manner reincarnated, it was taught, in every place in which the miracle of transubstantiation was wrought by the hands of the priest, and He was offered anew before the worshippers in the sacrifice of the Mass.

'The Eucharist,' it is declared, 'is not a sacrament only, it is also a sacrifice, and the offering made by Christ on Calvary continues, and will continue to the end of time, to be renewed in the Christian Church, as often as holy Mass is said.'[1]

The second modification was that the sacraments, of which seven came to be recognised, were invested with an importance which made it appear that the chief function of the Church was to labour for the sanctification of sinful men by infusing grace into them through sacramental channels. It was held that they operated mechanically, and with the consistency of a

[1] Hunter, *op. cit.*, § 727. *Decrees of the Council of Trent:* 'De Sacrificio Missae.'

physical process. As surely as the fire burns up the combustible matter which it seizes, so surely was the virtue inherent in the sacraments held to purify the soul—though with the proviso that as fire is checked when the material is drenched with water, so sacramental grace is nullified by a resisting will. From this point of view the method of salvation practically consisted in submitting to a therapeutic treatment conducted by the Church, in which the cure was gradually effected by divine energies which were given entrance to the soul through things done on the body, and the greatest of all by a holy food which was partaken of after a corporal and a carnal manner. And it is not surprising that this development provoked a depreciation in which the sacraments were declared to be no more than pledges of a Christian profession, or held, as by the Quakers, to have ceased under the Gospel. There must, however, be some creditable reasons why such a theory came to be cherished by a great Christian communion, which is amply furnished with intelligence as well as with piety. A partial explanation of the place given to the sacramental system in Roman Catholicism is that the religious consciousness demands, as was said, that salvation be made easy and secure, and under this system the requirements were such as all could comply with, since it was guaranteed that he who lived and died in the communion of the Church —whatever punishment he might have to undergo under the law of retribution on earth and in Purgatory —would attain in the end to the perfection and bliss of Heaven. It remains, however, a question whether the Church, having first made salvation too arduous by reverting to a doctrine of merits, did not go on to make it too easy by the promises which it annexed

to the observance of the sacraments. The further explanation may be that as the most urgent need of the human soul is to be knit to God in a vital communion, in which it is vivified and fortified by a divine energy, and as this has usually been experienced by baptised persons and often in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it seemed a good inference that the effect was due to a special virtue inherent in the holy ordinances, and that the same virtue could be ascribed to a whole system of cognate rites. But it is one thing to believe that the soul may enter into a union with God and become a partaker of His life, and quite another to believe that there exists a divinely appointed system of ordinances for the stated infusion of divine grace into the soul, and that there is an ecclesiastical authority which has been entrusted with the function of dispensing the holy energy according to general and particular needs.

We thus find on a conjunct view of religious history that in the matter of the way of salvation there has been a movement towards a goal—the progressive stages being distinguished by reliance on the methods of compulsion, ingratiation, obedience and faith. The process in which man has thus sought after satisfactory relations with the Divine Being has an analogy in the ways in which he coped with the tasks and problems of the material world, first in the Stone Age, then in the Bronze Age and last in the Iron Age. Or perhaps there is a still closer parallel in the forms of power by which he has successively asserted his mastery over nature—as manual power, horse-power, steam-power and electrical power. The analogy is obvious in two leading particulars. As in the Bronze Age a use continued to be made of stone, and in the Iron Age of stone and bronze, so with the advent of the higher theory of salvation

something was carried over from the earlier theory. And as there are parts of the world which are still in the Stone Age, so are there parts in which no better soteriological theory prevails than the way of coercion or the way of ingratiation. It has been more difficult in the spiritual field to advance to the higher method, and more difficult to maintain a better system after it had become known. While it has been very exceptional for a nation to lose valuable knowledge of the material sort which it had once acquired, it has been the rule rather than the exception that the community has declined from the higher to the lower spiritual and ethical levels. On the other hand, the human race has shown itself to be capable, when there has been an exceptional stirring of the spiritual life, of appreciating the superior doctrine, and of preferring it to that which was less worthy of God and man, or less efficacious for the attainment of the best elements of the good which are sought in the religious quest.

# CHAPTER XII

## THE PROBLEM OF ORIGINS

The question as to what religion is raises the problem as to whence it is. And the questions as to origin are two—how it began and progressed, and what were the moulding factors. The subject has always been found interesting in some of its aspects, and in recent times it has been investigated and debated with unprecedented ardour. Those who deem their religion their most precious possession, and indeed the one thing needful, have naturally desired to make clear to themselves how it came to them, and why it is that others dwell in darkness and under the shadow of death; while even the most detached modern mind must feel some curiosity as to how man first came to make the extraordinary venture of faith and worship, and how he went on to climb the heights that were reached by the Christian saint. It has also been the prevalent opinion that the inquiry into the origins of religion has momentous consequences—that if it could be shown that it was from above it would be authenticated as true, and that if it could be shown to be from beneath it would be utterly discredited. It has indeed become a commonplace in other connections that the manner of origin is irrelevant to the question of value, just as it is agreed to estimate a great man by what he is and has done, and not by his ancestry and his upbringing. But this principle cannot be applied in the religious sphere without some quali-

fication. It is certainly possible that the substance of religion might turn out to be true though in the beginning it was of human devising, and had derived its first materials from the imaginations of fools. On the other hand, origin may stand sponsor for truth. If the divine origin of Christianity can be proved, as the Church has ever confidently believed, this has certainly the effect of establishing the truth of the doctrines and of guaranteeing the efficacy of the saving provisions.

There have been two main types of theory concerning origins, and they may be conveniently distinguished as the theological and the evolutionary. The theological theory has affirmed great beginnings and has ascribed them, directly or indirectly, to the Creator. According to the evolutionary theory religion started as a low form of superstition, which was gradually improved upon, and both genesis and development are fully accounted for by human capacity and faculty and by natural environment. I go on to examine the chief positions of the two schools.

I

1. The view of the origin of religion taken in Christian Theology has been governed by the traditional doctrine of the creation and the original condition of man. This doctrine was founded on the narrative in Genesis, which was the more heartily welcomed as it seemed self-evident that in making man an all-powerful and all-holy God must have wrought a perfect work. And in a world in which all things were made very good, and man was the crown of creation, it also seemed obvious that nothing would be more perfect than the provision that was made for the enlightenment of man in the knowledge of God, and of the

conditions of pleasing God. This knowledge, it was usually held, was given through a special revelation, but there was also the alternative view that the Creator equipped man for religion by implanting in him an innate idea of His being and perfections, and by the gift of reason, whereby he was able, before reason was clouded by sin, to understand the invisible things of God from the creation of the world, even His eternal power and Godhead. Modern Theology has generally upheld the tenet of a primitive Monotheism, but has grown doubtful of the primeval revelation; and it has conceived of the first man, not on the lines of the intellectual colossus and the perfect character, but rather on the model of the innocent child who has thoughts about God that can be at once naïvely childlike and profoundly true.

2. The evolutionary theory, as was said, has operated with very different presuppositions. It was assumed that primitive man was in the lowest estate, and that the earliest form of religion, which must have been a purely natural product, was what was to be expected of the groping savage. Lucretius took as his text the saying that the gods were the offspring of fear. In the eighteenth century it was asserted that it was the invention of the ruling class, but clearly it must at least have existed before the priests, and it was improbable, as Hume pointed out, that in every land the masters would be clever enough to devise it, and the peoples stupid enough to be so imposed upon. Hume therefore fell back on the view that it had its source in terror, with which he coupled desire.

'All available evidence,' he says, 'as well as the analogy of the general course of history, leads to the conclusion that the lower polytheism or idolatry was and must have been the first and most ancient religion of mankind.' 'The motive

must have been one that was suited to the gross apprehension of human nature '—which must have been still more gross in the untutored childhood of the race—and he therefore took it to be self-evident that ' the first ideas of religion arose from a concern with regard to the events of nature, and from the incessant hopes and fears which actuate the human mind.' [1]

In the post-Darwinian period the problem was attacked afresh in the assurance that not only was the fact of human evolution established beyond doubt, but that the method was at last understood. It was taken for granted that at the outset man was only at one remove from the brutes, and that religion must have had the same lowly beginnings as man himself. In the first phase it was held that the rudimentary form of religion was an offshoot from the animistic system of thought. According to Tylor, man reasoned from the experiences of the dream and the swoon to the existence of a soul which was separable from the body and survived death, and he went on to fill his world with a multitude of other spirits fashioned on the same model.

' It was no spontaneous fancy,' he observes, ' but the reasonable inference that effects are due to causes which led the rude men of old days to people with such ethereal phantoms their own homes and haunts, and the vast earth and sky beyond.' [2] And a practical application of the theological doctrine was made in worship. ' The belief that these spirits controlled events, and that they received pleasure and displeasure from human actions, led naturally and indeed inevitably to active reverence and propitiation.' [3] The theory was given a more precise turn by Herbert Spencer, who fastened on the disembodied spirit or ghost as the object which supplied

[1] *Natural History of Religion*: Works, ed. Green and Grose, 1907, vol. ii. p. 308.

[2] *Primitive Culture*, [4], 1903, ii. p. 109.

[3] *Ibid.*, i. p. 427.

man with his first creed, and suggested the rudiments of a cult. 'It is emphatically true,' he says, 'that the first traceable conception of a supernatural being is the conception of a ghost, and from the ghost, once uniformly conceived, have arisen the variously conceived supernatural beings. We thus reach the conclusion that ancestor-worship is the root of every religion.' [1]

While the animistic doctrine was widely accepted in its Spencerian form as an established scientific result, and was also confidently popularised as a means of deliverance from the fear of God, in the recent decades there has been a growing opinion either that it went too far in its debasement of primitive piety, or that it did not go far enough. The opposition was represented in the first instance by Max Müller, who contended that man possessed a natural disposition to religion, and the equipment of 'a mental faculty' by which he was constrained to recognise the Infinite in the finite; that in the case at least of the early Aryans religions began with a perception of the Infinite in the mighty objects of the starry firmament and of the scenery of earth; and that 'possibly other peoples also may have started from the same beginnings and passed through the same vicissitudes.' [2] In the next phase it was pointed out that the most backward tribes, notably the Australian aborigines, have been under the influence of totemistic rather than of animistic ideas; and it seemed necessary, in accordance with the canon that we have our clearest glimpse of the first man in the lowest savage, to assign the priority to Totemism. The former prevalence and importance of Totemism were divined by M'Lennan, were traced by Robertson Smith in the early Semitic

[1] *The Principles of Sociology*, [3], 1885, i. pp. 280 ff.
[2] Hibbert Lectures on *The Origin of Religion*, 1881.

field, and were illustrated by the masses of material that were collected and commented on by Frazer. By Jevons and others it was carried back to primitive man.

'All external objects,' says Jevons, 'were conceived by him as personal, and he identified now one and now another with the will with which his heart prompted him to seek communion. Animals were the first of the external objects which came to be worshipped, and for a long time he continued to have only one object of worship, the totem or tribal god.' [1]

The claims of the totem, however, as of the ghost before it, were insecure, as it had to make way for a humbler idol if such could be discovered. Fetishism did not serve the purpose, as it seemed obvious that the worship of stocks and stones must have been secondary to belief in something else, but this objection did not apply to the dealings of savage man with the uncanny force of *mana*, which otherwise satisfied the conditions. There has, accordingly, been a growing tendency to see in *mana* the primeval stuff out of which the gods were fashioned, and in the attempts to manipulate it the first tentative approaches to the divine. Mr. Marett is cited as the author of the 'pre-animistic theory,' but he has been more concerned to show that Manism is sub-animistic and an independent growth, and he has expressed himself very cautiously on the point of priority.

'It would be untrue,' he says, 'to deny that the term "pre-animistic" was used by me designedly and with a chronological reference. What I would not be prepared to lay down dogmatically or even provisionally is merely that there was a pre-animistic era in the history of religion, when animism was not, and nevertheless religion of a kind existed.

[1] *Introduction to the History of Religion*, 1896, p. 411.

For all I know, some sort of animism in Tylor's sense of the word was a primary condition of the most primitive religion of mankind. But I believe that there were other conditions no less primary. Moreover, I hold that it can be shown conclusively that, in some cases, animistic interpretations have been superimposed on what previously bore a non-animistic sense.' [1]

It has to be added that the old and the new theories, sharply contrasted as they are, have been found capable of adjustment at some points. The theologian had a field in which he could accept the evolutionist's statement of the question, and make use of his method. For Theology had had to deal with the problem of the origin of heathen religion; and the conditions of this problem were much the same as those which were assumed by Hume and Spencer, since it was held that the state of original righteousness was followed by a Fall which brought about the corruption and even the brutalisation of the general mass of mankind. The possibility of such a combination was shown by Hobbes. Hobbes may not indeed be ranked as a Christian thinker, but he at least left unquestioned the Christian doctrines of human origins and of the history of true religion, and in going on to discuss the rise of false religion he employed the naturalistic method, and in fact made a striking anticipation of the animistic theory of the Darwinian era.

'In these four things,' he says, 'opinion of ghosts, ignorance of second causes, devotion towards what men fear, and taking of things casual for prognostics, consisteth the natural seed of religion. And for the matter or substance of the invisible agents so fancied, they could not by natural cogitation fall upon any other conceit, but that it was the same with that of

[1] *The Threshold of Religion*, [2], 1914, Preface.

the soul of man; and that the soul of man was of the same substance as that which appeareth in a dream to one that sleepeth; or in a looking-glass to one that is awake, which men, not knowing that such apparitions are nothing else but creatures of the fancy, think to be real and external substances, and therefore call them ghosts.' [1]

Again, from the anthropological side there has been one notable instance of a reversion to the theological tradition. It was pointed out by Andrew Lang that the lowest tribes of savages, though their workaday religion may consist in the traffic with ghosts and demons, or with sacred animals, usually recognise in the background a Supreme Being who does the works of the Maker and Ruler, and who has moral qualities and supports a moral order. And he contended with much force that it was unworthy of Science, and barely honest, to make use of the savage so long as he supported a preconceived opinion, and to drop him when his evidence was unfavourable.

'I do not pretend to know,' he observes, 'how the lowest savages evolved the theory of a God who reads the heart and makes for righteousness. It is as easy, almost, for one to believe that they were not left without a witness as to believe that this God of theirs was evolved out of the maleficent ghost of a dirty, mischievous medicine-man. There is much more justification than is commonly admitted for regarding the bulk of savage religion as degenerate or corrupted from its own highest elements.' [2]

3. It must be admitted that Theology has no direct knowledge of the original condition of mankind. The idea of Adam was welcome to the apologetic mind which felt that God must be exonerated from any responsi-

[1] *The Leviathan*, pt. I. ch. xii.
[2] *The Making of Religion*,[2], 1890, p. 170, ix.-xii.

bility for the sin and misery that are the scandal of our earth; and which essayed this by teaching that, while man had been made perfect, he abused the freedom with which he had been endowed, and so brought grievous and multiplying ills upon himself. And this doctrine has maintained its ground, at least in principle, as an intelligible and tenable solution of the problem of the rise of moral evil among mankind. It is nevertheless possible that God did not order things as the apologist conceives He ought to have done, and that He chose another method for bringing man into being and launching him on his career of mingled tragedy and glory. The truth that man is made in the image of God is on a quite different footing from the speculation as to the manner in which he attained this dignity.

And if Theology may not dogmatise about the origin of religion when the original condition of the race is obscure, no more is it permissible in the name of Science. The anthropological theories of the genesis of religion are in fact precarious inferences from very dubious premises. There are no first-hand sources of information on the subject, and the most that can be offered is a speculation based on the conception that may be formed of the primitive condition of the human race, of the relevant propensities and principles of human nature, and of the value of Anthropology for the elucidation of the subject. And on each of these heads there is room for wide differences of opinion. Even when mankind is embraced within the general scheme of evolution, the picture of the original condition may be painted very differently according as the chief motive is discovered in the animal inheritance or in the specifically human endowment. Again, students of human nature are far from agreed as to the relevant

principles, while it is more than doubtful if Psychology has yet done full justice to the spiritual powers and capacities which enter into the religious life. And finally, it is a question whether we may not learn more about the origin of religion by studying it at its highest level than by studying it at its lowest.

What seems to me a probable account of the beginnings of religions may be indicated. The human race, I must think, was a gradual creation. It has passed through stages similar to those of the individual who in the womb gradually developed human features, and thereafter was born into the world as an infant weighted with a mass of animal propensities, and who went on to attain the status of a rational and moral being with the promise and potency of perfection. And as in the development of the individual there is a point at which a member of our race, though his body evolved after the manner of the animals, came into possession of the higher qualities that stamp him as a human being, so was there a point at which the human species, whatever the extent of its debt to animal progenitors, found itself on the human plane, equipped with reason and conscience, and bearing the image of the Highest. The devout mind has found it easy to believe that in creating man God made use of pre-existent stuff and fashioned him out of the dust of the ground, and the substitution for dust of an animal species does not affect the essential point of the biblical narrative, which is that man now bears the image of God. Again, even as when everything is known which Science has to tell of the conception and the embryonic growth of the individual, it is a tenable view that an additional power came into play to produce the new personality, so may it be held that a creative act, which outwardly had the aspect of

progress *per saltum*, brought our species into being in its distinctively human character.

The problem, then, is how a species which had become human through the possession of the spiritual mode of being came to form religious ideas, and to practise religious observances. The determining factor, it seems to me, must have been the tendency, traceable throughout the history of the race, which is manifested in a yearning for God and an impulsion towards God. It is possible that the power of this instinct was felt in peculiar strength in the period when reason was less used and trusted than in later ages; or it may be that there was a point at which it was greatly intensified, when it stirred to its depths the life of the early population of the planet after the fashion of a tumultuous revival. On the theoretical side the instinct would involve, not indeed as much Theology as has been associated with the innate idea, but at least a conviction of the reality of the higher Being to which man felt himself drawn, and the assurance that in union with this Being the best would be found and enjoyed. And even as it is the way of man to dream of earthly happiness and to seek it in love or wealth or power or fame, so could our first forefathers dream of God, and think to discern Him either when they looked within or when they looked without, and if without, when they pondered the impressive objects whether of animate or inanimate nature. It may be that as a matter of history there were several independent beginnings corresponding to fundamental varieties of spiritual taste, insight and judgment. But it may also be that the venture of faith which was the first in time, and which served as the precedent and point of departure for other ventures, was made by a leader

who had a sense of the dawning greatness of their human species, who had seen nothing so worthy of reverence as men that were wise and strong and good, and who conceived of the Divine Being as existing after the likeness of their best. In the earliest period the human race doubtless produced some extraordinary individuals; and while the primitive representative of talent and genius must have been grievously fettered by the poverty of language, he had at his disposal the organising categories of thought; and it must have been quite within his powers, as was previously observed, to conceive of a highest Being who had made the world in which he lived, and who did the works of a ruler, a protector and a benefactor. And as the modern mother is able to impart the elements of a true Monotheism even to babes, there is no reason why, ever since man was able to speak as well as to think, the early sage should not have been able to communicate to his fellows the simple substance of the same creed. It might also be that the oldest human society was not wholly dependent for enlightenment upon the insight of the primordial sage and the witness of its own spirit. An additional avenue was suggested by Tennyson:

> Star to star vibrates light, may soul to soul
> Strike through a finer medium of its own?

The Psychology of the future will perhaps accept as established the telepathic transmission of thought; and in that event there may be a vogue for the theory that, when the human race acquired its specific characters, it became accessible to spiritual influences that radiated from the kindred communities of spiritual beings that are naturally supposed to exist in other habitable domains of the wider universe. And if

these, as may be thought likely, are at one in believing in God, it would be plausibly maintained that a dim consciousness of this cosmic faith emerged in the primitive human mind, and conveyed to it some illumination and guidance. And if this be a real possibility in a spiritual universe, much more is it credible to those who believe in a God in whom we live, and move and have our being, that primitive man felt the pressure of the divine spirit on his finite spirit, was haunted by the sense of His presence, enjoyed some inspiration in his thinking about divine things, and also received some inward attestation of such elements of truth as he had been enabled to apprehend.

II

In the treatment of the development of religion the two schools have also gone different ways. They have differently represented the general trend of religious history, and while one has confidently affirmed, the other has resolutely denied, the operation of supernatural factors in the historical process.

1. The traditional version of the course of religious history was in harmony with our observation that the habitual route of the religious mind is by way of pessimism to optimism. The natural development was depicted in the darkest colours. The original deposit of truth, it was held, was corrupted and lost; and as men were also deaf to the voice of God speaking through His works, they fell away to the worship of the creature in place of the Creator, and even bowed down before the meanest of creatures and the works of their own hands. This apostasy had for its consequence an ever-deepening moral degradation, while in turn the wickedness aggravated the spiritual blindness. In

the patristic period it was also held that the heathen religion had been instituted by demons, and that the deities of the popular faith were devils who had got themselves accepted as Gods. While, however, the human race in its main body pursued its course towards darkness and destruction, there was, it was held, a movement which was guided and sustained by a special revelation and a special training. This dispensation was begun in a patriarchal line, was carried forward in the education of the chosen people, and in the fulness of time reached its consummation in the Incarnation of God in Christ, and in the saving provisions of the gospel of regeneration, sanctification, and eternal life. The sublime conclusion of this scheme of thought, now, is the abiding conviction of the Christian Church, and Philosophy has generally endorsed it in its own way, but the pessimistic prologue did injustice to the spiritual aspirations and achievements of pre-Christian heathendom. It is true that the movements of the religious world have been peculiarly subject to a law of degeneration—that there are inveterate tendencies operative in human nature which assiduously work for the misunderstanding and corruption of great truths, and for the lowering and the vulgarisation of moral ideals, and that this downward trend has been marked in the after-history of every spiritual movement that has started from great beginnings; but it is not open to question that in the course of the ethnic development a series of new departures took place in which the human spirit was lifted to much higher levels than those from which it had declined in its times of decadence. In the great ethnic religions there is much which must be set down to the theoretic reason in a high-souled endeavour to comprehend and illuminate

the scheme of existence. And it is even more obvious that the commanding religious figures were ambassadors of the practical reason; and that, enjoying at the least the inspiration of conscience, they elevated the moral ideal, bound up piety with virtue, and conceived it to be a vital part of their mission to assert the supremacy of the moral law over the promptings of the animal nature and the dictates of worldly custom. In view of these circumstances it seems clear that Theology ought not to have been fettered by the Pauline account of the plight of our sin-bound and sin-stained race that was reached in the darkest hour, but should have remembered the more sympathetic estimate which he gave on Mars Hill, of the aspiration and striving of the religious spirit, and above all should have made an application of the Johannine conception of the Logos which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And in that case it could have advanced on the teaching of Clement and Origen, when it would have associated the higher ethnic faiths with Greek Philosophy as having made a positive contribution to the *praeparatio evangelica*.

2. The evolutionary treatment unified the history of religion by exhibiting it as a process in which the lower form of creed and cult had preceded, and evolved into, the higher form, and which on the whole was a progressive movement—the temporal succession of the stages corresponding generally to the ascending scale of spiritual and moral values. At the same time the genetic treatment was simplified by tracing every stage of the process to the operation of purely natural causes. There have, however, been considerable variations in the working out of the scheme. Very different versions have been given of the family-tree

of the religions; and while in the earlier period these were published with very great confidence, there is a growing opinion that it is a difficult if not an impossible task, and that several family-trees would need to be constructed. There have also been very different estimates of the moulding and guiding forces. According to one view, religion evolved out of a spiritual germ; according to another, it was produced out of non-religious elements by a kind of spontaneous generation. By one account man has been throughout in quest of God, by another he has been seeking a point of view which would serve for his better adaptation to a difficult environment. Some have laid stress on irrational impulses, others on the guidance of reason, and a third opinion has been that the movement began and was carried forward by unreason, but that it happily brought forth the fruits of wisdom. The work of Tiele is the most notable attempt that has been made to control and elucidate the whole material from the scientific standpoint, and I reproduce the salient features of his scheme with special reference to the treatment of the genetic problem that is developed in the noble book entitled *The Elements of the Science of Religion*.

Tiele constructed an elaborate morphological classification of religions, in which he distributed them into the two classes of nature-religions and ethical religions. In the class of the natural religions the ascending series was animistic Polydaemonism, therianthropic Polytheism, and anthropomorphic Polytheism. The ethical religions he arranged in the two classes of national and universal—the national being also described as nomistic from their association with a fixed code of faith and morals, while the universal were held to be less bound, and to operate with a set of spiritual

and moral principles. The genealogical classification, he observes, has only been worked out for some parts of the field, but he conceived that it corresponded generally with the morphological scheme, and that the movement had been from Animism through Polytheism to the spiritual and ethical heights of the universal religions. The causal explanation given of the evolution of religion is briefly as follows :

' When we speak of development,' he says, ' we imply that the object undergoing development is a unity — that the changes we observe are not like those that proceed from the caprices of fickle man, as the clothes we wear change with the freaks of fashion ; that the oak already exists potentially in the acorn, and the man in the child. " Development is," to quote an American scholar, " a continuous progressive change according to certain laws and by means of resident forces." In the second place, we imply that each phase of the evolution has its value, importance and right of existence, and that it is necessary to give birth to a higher phase, and continues to act in that higher phase.' [1]

The essential factors by which the development was initiated and furthered were the immanent forces of the human constitution, among which he gave prominence to a specifically religious principle :

' There was an instinct or an innate, original and unconscious form of thought.' ' It was not childish dreams that gave rise to that faith which has proved so stupendous a power in the world's history ; it was man's original, unconscious, innate sense of infinity that gave rise to his first stammering utterances of that sense, and to all his beautiful dreams of the past and of the future.' [2]

Of the utmost importance, also, was the co-operation of the powers and capacities of man's intellectual and

[1] *The Science of Religion*, 1897, p. 30. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

moral nature. There was, however, a need of something additional to stimulate the productive forces and to carry on the progressive movement. The favouring conditions are specified in a series of laws which he formulated, and which may be regarded as a parallel to the mechanism of biological evolution. The first is the law of the unity of the human mind, and is to the effect that every advance that was made in civilised achievement, especially in knowledge and in morality, tended to raise religion to a higher plane. The second is the law of progress through interaction. 'All development,' it is said, 'results from the stimulus given to self-consciousness by contact with a different stage of development whether higher or lower, and the religion that will attain the highest development is that which is most alive to the genuinely religious elements in other forms.' The third is the law of the influence of great personalities. These are, indeed, the heirs of the ages and the children of their time. But 'their creative spirit gives, as it were, voice and form to what had hitherto been powerless, though potentially present in the bosoms of others. It is they who awaken this life, who create this form; they are the sun without whose fostering beams the germs would die and the slumbering life would never awake.'[1]

The factors and the laws adduced by Tiele undoubtedly go some way to account for the rise and progress of religion. In affirming the existence of a spiritual faculty as an element of the human constitution he gives a probable explanation of the fact that such a thing as religion came into existence and has persistently held its ground. Undoubtedly also the upward movement was promoted by the influences

[1] *Op. cit.*, I. chaps. viii., ix.

which he specifies. If the religious instinct disposed men to seek their good in union with the best of beings, the higher that they rose in the moral scale the more worthily would they think of the nature of their salvation and of the God on whom they were dependent. It is, however, an equally well-founded observation that the moral standard has repeatedly been raised, and the moral life of the peoples enriched, as the consequence of the appearance of a better religion. Next, there is no doubt that a religion has sometimes been improved by coming into contact with other faiths, but the importance of this law may be thought to be exaggerated in view of the fact that Hebrew Prophetism developed in circles which regarded the heathen faiths with loathing or contempt, and that Christianity came into existence among a people that was under the sway of Judaistic rigour and exclusiveness. The law of the influence of the great personality is of the highest importance. Probably each of the advances that were made on the lower levels had a prophet and apostles, and each of the ethical and universal religions clearly began in the experience and the teachings of an individual founder. But if the great personality explains the epoch-making advances in the spiritual life of mankind, it certainly does not explain itself. 'There always remains something,' as Tiele admits, 'which cannot be accounted for by heredity and environment,' and he adds that 'this is the chiefest thing of all.' And to Tiele's list have to be added two other laws which likewise point to mystery and higher causality. One might be called the law of spiritual vivification. An extraordinary intensification of the spiritual life has occurred from age to age in the history of different peoples or groups of peoples; and this quickening has been, equally with the appearance

of the prophetic instrument, the condition of the planting, the rapid expansion, and the reformation of the great faiths which have successfully contended for the spiritual allegiance of mankind. This vivification seems in some periods even to have swept across continents, as in the middle centuries of the first millennium before our era; and in the history of the Christian Church it was exemplified in the Pentecostal experience of the primitive age, in the medieval revivals, and in the religious zeal which accompanied the Reformation, and which so deeply coloured the history of England and Scotland in the seventeenth century. And in these racial experiences, as in the individual parallel, the law has been as expressed by Matthew Arnold:

> We cannot kindle when we will
> The fire that in the heart resides,
> The spirit bloweth and is still,
> In mystery our soul abides.

To the influence of great individuals has to be added the influence of great events. The decisive stages in the spiritual history of mankind have been bound up with new things which occurred in history, and which gave rise to exalted beliefs and fresh hopes. The events which took place in the history of Israel supplied the prophets with the chief elements of their knowledge of God, and it was probably no accident, but an illustration of the principle that there is light in the way of the Cross, that in the period which ranks as the golden age of prophecy the experience of the chosen people was a long-drawn agony. And Christianity was largely due to new things that happened in the world. It was not only because of what Jesus was, but because He died upon the Cross, and after His death was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, and of many brethren at once, that Christianity

developed its special doctrines, and that it took the commanding place it has won in the spiritual world.

Inasmuch as religion has grown up in a terrestrial environment, and under human conditions, undoubtedly much can be explained on the same principles as other historical movements and events. The work that has been done in the genetic studies of Tiele and others is of value, and more may be expected if it should come to be agreed that there is such a thing as a Science of History, and if more progress should be made in the observation of the uniformities and sequences, and in appraising the influence of environment, race, economic needs, and other factors. But what seems to me certain is that a Science of Religion can only give at the best a fragmentary view of a historical process which has been penetrated by forces, and governed by laws, of the kind that empirical Science does not permit itself to recognise. The Science of Religion breaks in a most vital particular with the movement which it undertakes to explain. For the scientific assumption is that at no stage of history has the power that is operative in the universe done anything for man except to guarantee him the use of his natural endowment of spiritual capacity, and of rational and moral powers, while it is the most deep-seated of religious convictions that man as we know him, in his natural condition, is dependent on the help of God for the attainment of his true well-being, and that this includes the possession of enlightenment and of moral power. In religion man has sought victory over the world through union with the God who is mightier than the world, while at the scientific standpoint the world may be thought to be given the lordship over God. When this doctrine arose within the Church under the name of Pelagianism it was cast

out as a pestilent heresy which would rob a distressful world of the sorely-needed gospel of divine initiative and saving grace; and it cannot be expected that it should be acceptable in the still more drastic form in which it is now pressed upon it from without, even though this be done in the august name of Science.

It seems quite unwarranted to assume that no factors have entered into the relations of man with God other than those found in his relations with the world and his finite fellow-creatures. That it should have been so is extremely unlikely if it be that in religion man has really had to do with the living God, and not merely with the ideas and the expectations which he has formed concerning God, with the service which he has prayed Him to accept at his hands. At the least, communion with God must involve as much as in the parallel cases. Every form of personal union with which we are acquainted—notably friendship and the estate of marriage—involves the participation of the two members in a common life, and a contribution from two sides towards the maintenance and enrichment of the fellowship; but if it is to be held that in the religious union God has been otiose, and that everything has been initiated from the human side, the religious relationship is made to appear the poorest because the most one-sided and most barren of this whole class of experiences. Rather might it be taken for granted by all who believe religion to be a reality that God is the all-important member of the sacred association, and that there has been a contribution from the divine side which makes the religious relationship immeasurably to surpass, both in content and in promise, the most intimate and enriching form of human union. And if, as in the earthly parallels, the divine initiative and the divine benefits be a reality, then the attempts to

explain the spiritual history of mankind solely in terms of human aspiration and endeavour must be on the whole a travesty and not an explanation. It is as if one should give a description of the life of a family in which the ideas and the behaviour of the children filled the whole picture, and the purposes and the action of the parents were dismissed as negligible. And there is more than antecedent probability on which to found. When we trace the course of religious history so far as it is known, and when we study its golden ages, and especially the origins and the achievement of Christianity, there is a very considerable body of evidence to justify the belief that the living God took to do with the historical process. There are many things in it which are very inadequately explained by pointing to the reflex action of a progressive civilisation, the collision of ideas and ideals, and the casual appearance of the great man, and which fit in much better with the religious view that the movement was inspired, or at least guided and controlled, by a divine intelligence that worked within it and through it in the pursuit of spiritual and moral ends. The Hebrew prophets made this assumption, which they used as the key to the interpretation of the extraordinary experiences of their people; and the same principle is fundamental in the most influential system of religious philosophy that has circulated in the Church and the world—that, viz., which is set forth in the epistles of St. Paul. And the apostle's interpretation may be briefly outlined.

3. St. Paul, who was at home in two religions, and who also had a knowledge of various forms of heathenism, had a philosophical delight in wide views, and also much of the modern passion for causal explanations, and he had much to teach in his own

language about the factors and the laws of religious development. Among the factors he gave the pre-eminent place to God, and to the operations of His power, His wisdom and His goodness. He also made some generalisations in regard to the ways of God which might be considered as laws that direct the divine intelligence, and govern the divine will, in the exercise of justice and mercy. According to the apostle the primary factors in religious history were to be found on the one hand in the reign of sin and the punishment which follows in its train, on the other in the progressive revelation of truth and grace whereby God sought to deliver mankind from its guilt and its thraldom. In coping with sin there had been, first, a signal manifestation of the divine power. One of Paul's generalisations was that the greatest things in religious history have been accomplished by the humblest means; and the reason, he conceived, was that it might be made manifest that they were God's doing, and that He might be exalted in the earth. 'God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that He might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God' (1 Cor. i. 27-29). The mystery of the religious genius for which Tiele has no explanation was easily explained: God needed instruments for His work, and He raised them up when they were needed, and girded them by His power (Gal. i. 15, 16). But chiefly was the power of God made manifest in the spiritual realm in the person and the work of Christ—'to them that are called,

both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God' (1 Cor. i. 23, 24). And he found the same power revealed in extraordinary impressiveness in the dispensation of the Spirit, in which it is granted to the believer to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inward man (Eph. iii. 16), and even to do all things through Christ which strengtheneth him. Next, the apostle found in history striking evidences of a divine wisdom. 'O the depth of the riches,' he cries, 'both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!' (Rom. xi. 33). There were indeed unsearchable depths, and he confessed that he only knew in part, but it seemed to him that the general scope and plan of the divine dealings bore the clear impress of a supreme intelligence. For in dealing with the most intractable material the most splendid results had been achieved by the use of means which man would have expected to be utterly futile. This he found exemplified in the divine government of the world, in which the contrary aims and strivings of the peoples had been overruled, and their doings and sufferings had been made to serve as a preparation for the Kingdom of God (Gal. iv. 3, 4). The other and chiefest example was what might be called the principle of the scheme of salvation, according to which God purposed to subdue mankind unto Himself, while yet He did not rely on the force which is at the disposal of omnipotence, but made trial of what could be achieved in response to self-sacrificing love and unmerited favour. And it was seen that the wisdom of God was greater than the wisdom of man when the crucified Christ was given a name that is above every name—'that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father' (Phil. ii.

9-11). The apostle, again, found enough in the tragical history of the race to show that its divine Governor has ruled in righteousness and has visited upon sin its appropriate penalties, whereof the worst is that wickedness is punished by multiplying, and by coming to a head in utter spiritual impotence and blindness. But the crowning conclusion and certitude was that God had been revealed in His dealings with sinners of mankind as the Being whose nature and whose name is love. The chief manifestations of the divine that he found were these—the forbearance that had been shown in delaying the full punishment merited by sin (Rom. iii. 25); the timing of deliverance for the hour when the world had touched the lowest depths of sin and misery; above all, the unspeakable gift of Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 8), and the infusion of the very life of God Himself into the life of humanity in the economy of the Holy Ghost (Rom. v. 5; Eph. i. 13-14). And in his individual experience St. Paul saw a revelation of the same God through similar dealings. He knew that God was love because of what He had wrought when He revealed His Son in him; while as regards the happenings of his outward life he saw in many the hand of the God of a kindly providence, and touching the afflictions of which his life was full there was a sufficient theodicy in the assurance that 'to them that love God all things work together for good' (Rom. viii. 28). 'In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Rom. viii. 37-39).

The theological interpretation can be harmonised to a certain extent with the scientific interpretation. Its essential principle is that God has done things, and still does them, and it is quite compatible with this that things should be done in a providential as well as in a miraculous way. It is a common opinion that if it be shown that an event was due to natural causes it is thereby shown that God had no hand in it; but as we ourselves act in and through the forces and the laws of nature, and at the same time are of opinion that we carry out plans and perform acts of which our mind is the true cause, it is not evident why it should be thought impossible for God to do the same. It is quite a credible as well as an intelligible view that there are natural laws which governed the developments of the history of Israel, and that God embraced these in His providential government and employed them as means for the accomplishment of His purposes of judgment and mercy. It is therefore easy for Theology, if it does not forget its own doctrine of Providence, to accept assured results in the way of natural causation as only throwing fresh light on the instrumentality of the works of God. On the other hand, it seems to me that when it is affirmed, not only that the causes which are called natural have played a large part in the history of religion, but that they have been the only causes, a legitimate and useful method is supplemented by an unfounded dogma. It is no casual impression, but has been the deep-seated conviction of the Christian Church in all ages, that the mind and the arm of God were revealed in sacred history. The grace of God is the most probable explanation of the fact that, notwithstanding the pressure of the law of degeneration, which is one of the best established in this sphere,

at intermittent periods, and usually when the situation was at its worst, there has taken place a quickening which raised the spiritual life of a nation or a generation to a higher plane, and enriched it with more splendid visions and with fresh spiritual powers. Especially may it be held with a good intellectual conscience that the hand of a wonder-working God was revealed in the structures of Hebrew Prophetism and of primitive Christianity which arose in startling and sublime contrast to the anarchical superstitions and the licensed immoralities of the environing realms of heathenism. And above all, remembering Jesus Christ one need not be ashamed to confess to the belief that more than human nature and natural law has gone to the making and the perfecting of religion.

It was a great interpretation of great things which was given by St. Paul when he traced in the spiritual history of our race a revelation of the power, the wisdom, the righteousness and the goodness of a personal God. But in our age it has had to reckon with two strong objections. One is that everything can be explained in other ways, and that the action of God is a superfluous hypothesis. On this I have already touched, and would only add that the same reasons which are given for setting God aside have convinced some very able men that the causal efficiency of the mind of the objector is also a superfluous hypothesis—the speech or writing by which he delivers himself of his opinion being sufficiently accounted for by the reactions of his bodily organism to a particular physical stimulus. The fact is that the evidence for the proposition that God has carried out rational and ethical purposes in history is the same in kind as that which convinces ordinary people that human beings other than themselves exist, and which

leads them to think that the wisdom and the goodness of a parent or a friend are the true causes of the behaviour towards themselves which emanates from various systems of phenomena with which they have relations.

The second objection, which carries much weight with other minds, is that the notion of God carrying out special purposes in the way described is anthropomorphic, and unworthy of God. God may do everything, or He may do nothing, but at least He may not be thought of as doing anything in particular—as an individual among individuals who forms plans and uses means like theirs. And this is an attitude of which none will speak lightly who has endeavoured to realise the awfulness of God, and the import of the attributes of infinitude. Between the Creator and the creature there is a great gulf fixed; and as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts. But just for the reason that His ways are not our ways, it may well be that we limit Him when we think to exalt Him. The charge of anthropomorphism may be retorted, and I think justly, on the critic of the ordinary religious standpoint. For it would seem that he is under the prepossession that, just as it is impossible for a king who has the business of a kingdom on his mind to concern himself with the affairs of all his individual subjects, so is it impossible that the Infinite Being who is the ground of the universe, and who upholds the cosmic order throughout innumerable worlds, should entertain special purposes bearing on the history of the nations of the earth, and the life of their component units. But surely it is at least a sublime possibility that God, for the very reason that He is the God of infinite perfection, is and does what from the human point of view

seems an incongruity if not a contradiction—that while bearing the burden of the illimitable universe, He is also present to every part of it in the plenitude of His attributes, ministers to each according to its needs or with reference to its end, and even condescends to take part in the life of the world in the character of an individual dealing with other individuals. If this be so —and I believe that it is an astounding religious paradox which is also a master-truth—it may be believed that Paul was not mistaken when he traced the doings of a purposing and acting God in the history of a race of beings bearing the divine image, and when he taught—in this following his Master—that even the individual is the object of the providential dispensations as well as of the grace of a Heavenly Father.

# CHAPTER XIII

## CONCERNING THE TRUTH OF RELIGION

THE subject of these lectures is the nature of religion, and my main concern has been to show what it has professed to be, and what it has undertaken to do. I have, however, diverged on occasion from the empirical standpoint; and in drawing to a close, I shall gather up the results of the inquiry, and briefly discuss the supreme issue of truth. As a fact, the study of the nature of religion yields a very important contribution towards the settlement of its truth. It should seem obvious that we must know what religion is before we discuss whether it is true—though this has been overlooked by some who have attacked it most violently, and also by some who have defended it most zealously. Moreover, the nature of religion, when it is understood, is its best apology. One of the weightiest of the arguments in support of the truth of religion is that which is founded on the consideration of its aims and provisions, and especially of the nature of the doctrine which has been transmitted to the later generations as the harvest from the spiritual history of mankind.

### I

We may sum up by saying that the study of the religions of the world makes, in the first instance, a bewildering impression of diversity and incoherence, but that the historical process is found to have been controlled and guided by unifying principles, and that

the age-long occupation with God and divine things issued in conclusions which have a claim to finality.

1. Throughout untold centuries, and in every division of the human race, there has welled up in human experience an abounding spiritual life which, in accordance with the habitual behaviour of life, has found expression in a lavish variety of forms and activities. At every stage of our journey the rich manifoldness of the phenomena has been forced on the attention. At the outset we distinguished five capital types of the religious subject, representing very different degrees of equipment and insight, and we have also recognised important variations of the individual and the collective subjects. The psychological material was found to be extremely complex—not merely showing the customary interplay of thought, feeling and volition, but exhibiting these elements in the most diverse combinations, and also betraying the influence of more recondite elements that stir and strive in our mystic frame. In the greatest of the religious subjects the ordinary powers and capacities were quickened and reinforced, and these interpreted the experiences as due to the inpouring of a supernatural life into the creaturely vessels, and the shining of light from on high. Thereafter I sought to reach the heart of our subject by putting three questions—what has man sought in religion? whence has he sought it? how has he sought it? And the answers to each seemed to plunge us into a hopeless medley of aims, beliefs and methods. As regards the end sought, it appeared that, according to the most general and most persistent intention, religion has been the quest and the foretaste of some kind of salvation; but it was observed that other aims have blended with the practical purpose in the highest forms of religious experience, and that each of these could

assert its independence, and in certain periods or among particular classes had even claimed to be pre-eminent or exclusive. One important variation, we found, is the obligational type, in which piety has been cast in the mould of the dutiful recognition of the rights and the laws of God, and with this was co-ordinated the emotional type, which has felt the spell cast on the soul by the beauty of a divine object, and which has made the response that is native to love. And again, as there are those to whom it has seemed that there is nothing better under the sun than to explore some field of nature or some chapter of human history, so has there been an important religious type which has chiefly sought to know what might be known about God and His ways, and which has chiefly rejoiced in the prospect of the beatific vision, and of the disclosures of the land of unclouded light. The diversity and the dissonance have been not least marked in regard to the idea of God, which is the presupposition or the goal of every considerable form of religious aspiration and striving. The Divine Being, as we saw, has been conceived as an inanimate object, as a living creature, as an invisible energy, as an impersonal Spirit, as a personal Spirit, and finally as a mysterious and unknown entity ; and each of the positive conceptions of Deity has been framed on the mean, the mediocre, and the sublime scale, and has been filled with a content drawn from every province of the external world, and from every department of the human constitution and of human experience. And yet again, there has been great diversity of theory as to the procedure to be followed in the cultivation of relations with the Divine Being. The method has varied in accordance with the special motive that was dominant in any particular phase of the religious life, and also in accordance with the

different conceptions that were entertained of the nature of the Divine Being. In examining this question we chiefly restricted our view to the religious type which has looked to God for a salvation, and we found that man has sought divine aid in the most diverse ways—sometimes by seeking to force Him into his service, sometimes by conciliating His favour, sometimes by keeping His moral laws, and sometimes by committing himself trustfully to His goodness and mercy.

But if the field of religious history has the appearance of a spiritual jungle, it is only on a superficial view that any jungle is a chaos, and an order of some kind certainly underlies the confusion in which the spiritual life of the race seems to have run riot. Religion has at least had the unity of a vital process. There has been much debate as to the factors, natural or supernatural, by which the religious development was initiated and promoted, and it is uncertain how far the chronological succession of the stages has coincided with the morphological classification; but it is not open to question that the religious history of the race had the character of a movement towards an end at which a particular view of existence was carried to the pitch of ideal perfection. Religion has had a life-history similar to that of the tree—or rather perhaps of the orchard in which trees of different species were planted, came to maturity, and bore their fruit in its season, and which at a particular stage reached its highest point of value and productiveness. In the history of religion we may also detect the intellectual unity of a process of reflection in which a matter has been thoroughly thought out, as when we draw a logical conclusion, or make an all-round application of accepted principles. It also exhibits progressive improvements in instruments and method. According to the Christian interpretation, as

was observed, the process has also had an ethical unity, as in the discipline that is planned by the parent or the teacher for the development of the mental powers of a child and the formation of his moral character.

The unity of the religious history of mankind may be affirmed in at least two vital particulars—that there is a scheme of thought which may be called the religious conception of existence and of human life, and that in the course of human progress this scheme was progressively elaborated and was finally brought to perfection. The general position for which the *consensus gentium* may be claimed is that man is entitled to the defence and the furtherance of his highest interests, and that for this he is dependent on the favour and the protection of a Divine Being. Agreeably with the chief end and postulate of religion, the central line in the historical movement has been that of the advance towards the richest conception of the nature of salvation, towards the doctrine of God as the almighty, the all-wise and the all-good, and towards the ideal theory of the terms on which the favour and the protection of God are enjoyed. The idea of the content of salvation, as was observed, has passed through three main stages in the progress towards the matured and final doctrine. On the lowest level the idea of salvation practically coincided with the mundane hope of prosperity and security ; at the second level it became the ascetic ideal of the blessedness that is achieved by flight from the world ; and the great climax was the Christian vision of a plenary salvation which, while primarily spiritual, comprehends every element of good in time and eternity that can enrich and ennoble the estate of the redeemed soul and of the regenerated society. The idea of the Divine Being was similarly purified, elevated and expanded, and it found a firm lodg-

ment in the mind of the race as the idea of the all-perfect Being. The evolution of the idea of God has indeed been a complicated and obscure process. We found that there have been at least four radically different conceptions of the nature of Deity, and that each of these took many different shapes, and was finally formulated in impressive shape as a theological or philosophical doctrine. Each route led to a summit, and the commanding peaks have been four—Materialism, Agnosticism, Pantheism, and Theism. When, next, the matured types of theological doctrine were tested by the criteria immanent in religion, the superiority of Theism seemed incontestable, inasmuch as it alone has proclaimed a God who can be wholly trusted to sympathise with the distress of man, and to possess the power as well as the will to save him. In the Christian gospel this assurance was made more assured by the doctrine that God shined upon the world in the face of Jesus Christ, and that all the might and the wisdom of the Infinite Being are at the disposal of a divine love which has its mirror and its measure in His ministry of loving service, and in the spirit of the sacrifice of Calvary. As regards the conditions of salvation—the other integral part of the religious system of thought—it was shown that the four main methods which have been practised in the different ages, viz., compulsion, ingratiation, obedience and faith, form an ascending scale in respect of their degrees of spiritual dignity and efficacy. The way of faith, which is represented by the Christian gospel, was maintained to be the ideal provision, inasmuch as it proposes terms of salvation which, despite the guilt and the spiritual weakness of man, are easy of fulfilment, at the same time that they support the interests of morality by giving the promise and the guarantee of a new obedi-

ence. And while the programme of salvation was thus brought to perfection, a full provision was also made for the satisfaction of those spiritual types for which religion has been primarily an affair of duty towards God, or of love to God or of enlightenment about God and divine things. The reverence for the Highest which is native to man, and which is linked with the disposition to obey the highest that he discerns, has been imperiously claimed by the infinite Being whose majesty is enthroned in holiness, and whose omnipotent will is also a righteous and beneficent will. The love of which man has offered many tokens to very imperfect representatives of Deity has been claimed with a unique appeal by the infinite God who loves even as Christ loved, and by the Son in whom the Father was revealed. And finally, it has been a marked feature of the history of religion that it undertook to satisfy the yearning for light, and that at the highest stage it appeared with the character of the progressive revelation which shone more and more unto the perfect day.

Religion, then, has advanced towards a goal, and the goal has been a many-sided fulfilment of the spiritual aspirations of mankind. And it is because Christianity is the meeting-place of the fourfold aspirations, and has undertaken to satisfy them fully, that it rises high above all rival modes of faith, and has taken its place in history as the absolute religion. It is, indeed, another question whether any one of the historical forms which Christianity has assumed has a title to finality. Of the great syntheses that have been effected —Patristic Christianity, Greek Christianity, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism—each may be held to have been the best or the most useful version of Christianity that could be elaborated by the Church

in a given historical situation, but doubtless each has been one-sided, and has embraced in its doctrinal system, along with assured truths of Christianity, a large amount of matter which was of secondary importance, and was precariously grounded. And it must be thought possible that another influential ecclesiastical form will arise, embodying the best results of the travail of Protestantism, which, while as authentically Christian, will differ as much from each of its predecessors as these differed from one another in the proportion and perspective of the doctrinal system. On the other hand, it is inconceivable that religious genius should be able to improve upon the essence of the faith which exhibits the perfect realisation of the religious idea in all its essential elements and in all its vital bearings. Nor is it to be feared or hoped that mankind, knit as it is to the Divine Being by many cords, should cast away after possessing it the substance of the religion in which the most treasured blessings are promised to sinners of mankind on terms of pure grace, and also guaranteed by the power and the goodness of the God who unites all the might of infinite Godhead with all the tenderness and the sympathy that were revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

2. If this general view of the nature of religion and of the essence of Christianity be correct, the reality has been larger and more complex than has usually been made to appear in the theories of the philosophical and scientific schools.[1] When a theory is formed about life, and

[1] This criticism does not apply to Pfleiderer's treatment of the great subject, as represented by *Religionsphilosophie auf geschichtlicher Grundlage*,[3], 1909. It was characteristic of Scottish Theology from Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man* to Flint's *Theism* to hold that religion has engaged the personality in the whole range of its powers, and has not been an affair merely of the intellect, of the heart or of the will. This position has been maintained and developed in the

especially about the life of spirit, it seems to be fated to be framed on narrower lines than the phenomena which it seeks to systematise and to interpret. In the first period of the philosophical discussion the usual procedure was to patronise one or other of the lesser religious types, and to find in this the key to the nature of religion and the goal of religious history. In the eighteenth century the idea of salvation was little congenial to the higher culture of the Western world, and thinkers naturally looked in other directions for the chief end of religion and the substance of Christianity. One line which was taken was to define morality as the substance of religion, and to disparage the theoretical and emotional elements which are not obviously comprehended in the moral life. In accordance with this principle the path of religious progress was traced in its gradual approximation to morality, and Christianity was praised as the highest religion in respect of the purity and the nobility of its ethical code, while it could be anticipated that, when that which was perfect was come, nothing would be left of religion save allegiance to the moral law and faith in the moral order. But this was to make the obligational type the one legitimate representative of the many-sided reality, and in doing so to give the preference to the debilitated variety in which duty towards God is reduced to a mere sense of duty which dispenses with God. It is as unjust and unintelligent to resolve religion into morality as it is to make morality the substance and the sole criterion of the Fine Arts. The second line which was taken was to explain the purpose of religion,

important contributions of Principal Galloway—*Studies in the Philosophy of Religion*, 1904; *The Principles of Religious Development*, 1907; *The Philosophy of Religion*, 1914.

and to interpret the Christian system, from the point of view of the emotional disciple. This was done in the famous theory of Schleiermacher, who gave the primacy to devout feeling, and distinguished the religions as representing an ascending series of admirable pious states—the lowest being the general sense of dependence, the second the experience associated with the troubled conscience, and the third the sense of blessedness and emancipation that is enjoyed through faith in Jesus of Nazareth. The theory has a certain justification in the fact that one of the most distinctive features of religious experience is the uniqueness of the sentiments which it nourishes; and it is quite an effective plea for religion that to be devoid of piety is to be wanting in an important element of insight, taste and refinement. But piety has flourished so abundantly in the past because it has been believed to be a great deal more than an emotion; and if it should come to be supposed that it was only a mode of feeling, counting for no more than the feeling for the sublime and beautiful in nature, it is certain that it would play a very modest part in the life of the generations that are to come. The third of the one-sided interpretations is that which has found the essence, if not the whole, of religion in its theoretical content. This view has naturally found much favour with the class of disciples who pursue the learned vocation. The most famous version of the theory is that of Hegel, and a summary statement of his construction may be conveniently quoted from Schwegler:

> The burthen of all religion is the inward exaltation of the soul to the Absolute as the all-comprehending, all-reconciling substance of existence, the knowing of himself on the part of the subject as in unity with God. All religions seek the unity of the divine and the human. The rudest attempts

in this direction occur (1) in the natural religions of the East. God in them is still natural power, natural substance, before which the finite, the individual, disappears as a nullity. A loftier idea of God we find (2) in the religions of spiritual individuality, in which the divine is regarded as subject—as sublime subject full of wisdom and might in Judaism, the religion of sublimity; as galaxy of plastic divine forms in the Greek religion, the religion of beauty; as absolute political purpose in the Roman religion, the religion of the understanding or of expediency (means to an end). Positive reconciliation of God and the world is only attained at last, however, (3) in the Revealed or Christian religion, which, in the person of Christ, contemplates the God-man, the realised unity of the Divine and human, and apprehends God as the self-externalising (self-incarnating) idea that from this externalisation eternally returns into itself—that is to say, as the Triune God.[1]

The human race, to express it otherwise, started with a dim and confused idea of the Divine Being with whom it has to do; thereafter it embraced the pantheistic doctrine which identified God with the universe; at the next level it adopted the deistic doctrine of the personal God who exists above and outside the world; and finally it reached the Panentheism which affirms the spirituality of God, magnifies the divine immanence, and proclaims the reality and the necessity of an Incarnation. Agreeably with this, man felt at the first stage that he was helplessly dependent on God, at the second that he was practically independent of Him, while at the final stage he acquired the insight that God and man are interdependent.

It is, now, a defensible view that the central movement in religious history has been the development of the idea of God, or the self-disclosure of God. If there be one element in the synthesis that is more important than

[1] *History of Philosophy*, III (Eng. tr.), 1868, p. 343.

the others, it is the idea of God which is the presupposition and the conclusion of the religious scheme of thought and aspiration, and the source of its moral dynamic. But the knowledge of God is not the whole fabric ; and Christianity, as has been maintained, ranks as the goal of the development and the perfect religion, not merely because of the fulness and splendour of its vision of God, but also because it promised the plenary salvation, and opened up the new and living way of access to God. And even if we limit our attention to the theological aspect of the evolution of religion, it cannot be said that Hegel reported accurately on the preparatory stages, or that he did justice to the doctrine of the Christian Theism which he accepted as final. As to the nature of the Divine Being, it was rightly observed that there was a grand progression of thought from God as object or natural substance to God as subject or conscious spirit ; but it is a very questionable position that the mind subsequently rose to a higher conception of God than the idea of a subject, and it is certain that, if there be a greater conception, Christianity does not stand sponsor for it. The notion of God as subject or personal being is the highest that can be grasped by the human mind ; and if it make the attempt to rise higher, it seems to me that, instead of attaining to greater insight and knowledge, it declines to the affirmation of an unknown or an unintelligible mode of being. In the general movement of theological thought it was and continued to be common ground that the Divine Being is a subject, and the principal stages to be distinguished are those in which the conception of a personal Deity was progressively elevated and perfected. There is, therefore, reason for preferring the old scheme, according to which the lowest stage was idolatry or Poly-

daemonism with its innumerable and essentially unethical spirits; the next Polytheism, in which, as there were many gods, Deity was limited in power, wisdom and goodness; and the highest Monotheism, in which God is held to be one, the personal mode of being is conjoined with infinitude, and the divine attributes are expanded into eternity, omnipresence and omnipotence, perfect righteousness and self-sacrificing love. When Hegel, on the mere ground that the religion of the Old Testament represented God as a subject, placed it in the same division with Greek and Roman Polytheism, he must be thought to have judged much less intelligently than was done by the ancient Church when it maintained against Marcion that the God of Moses and the prophets was essentially the same with the God of Christ and the apostles. For the God of the New Testament is as truly a subject as the God of the Old Testament in that He knows and feels and wills, and enters into personal relations with His children. The most characteristic difference, as Paul taught, was that in the old dispensation witness was chiefly borne to the righteous God who had placed mankind under a legal discipline with its sanctions of rewards and punishments, while in the new dispensation the emphasis was laid on the self-sacrificing love of God, and on the gospel of His spontaneous grace. The sequence of dependence, independence and interdependence, in which Hegel saw the ascending scale of the religious relationship, is a generalisation which does more to misrepresent than to elucidate the historical facts. Pantheism is, of course, accompanied by a sense of entire dependence, but it was a comparatively late theoretical development, while it has never pretended to dominate the mind of the human race as a whole. The deistic stage of the independence of God and man, or of pure subjectivity, for which the

Old Testament is said to be typical, is in reality very poorly represented by the religion of Israel at its highest. The God of the prophets was not the God of the latter-day Deist. He was present in all places, He was the power in the storm, He ruled the waves of the sea, He caused the grass to grow on the mountains and filled the valleys with corn, He made bare His arm in the history of the nations and in the ordering of the individual lot, and above all He enlightened His servants with knowledge and upheld them by His free spirit. And no less a protest must be made against the attempt to identify the Christian doctrine of salvation with the Hegelian tenets of the unity and the interdependence of God and man. While Hegel conceived, after the fashion anticipated by the Hindu sages, that we are saved when our eyes are opened as to the essential and permanent relations of God and man, the Christian doctrine is that in order to salvation new works of God were done among men in the person and work of Christ. Again, it is Christian doctrine that man only attains to self-realisation, or becomes what he is capable of becoming, by self-surrender to God—when he is enriched by the self-communication of the God who was incarnate in Christ, and who as the Holy Ghost makes His dwelling in believing souls. But it is a perversion of history to make it appear that Christ and the apostles, or any considerable section of the Church, have been responsible for the tenet which I take to be the other half of the Hegelian position—viz., that the Infinite God is also dependent on finite beings like man, and that not merely for a temple in which to dwell, but also for the opportunity and the means of becoming a conscious and ethical Spirit.

During the nineteenth century, as was noted, there was a growing recognition that religion has been

directed to a practical end. The practical interpretation, which in some periods had been a commonplace of Theology, and which has usually seemed self-evident to the multitude, obtained a philosophical vogue through the influence of Kant, who conceived that the chief function of faith had been to place on God the responsibility of ensuring to man the eventual attainment of the *summum bonum*. This view has been widely accepted in principle, though with much difference in detail, by the later generations of philosophers, and the same general finding has also been commonly endorsed by the historian and the anthropologist. But it cannot be said that the full content of the idea of salvation has been understood, or that, when understood, it has been generally appreciated. Kant supposed that the hope of salvation could be reduced to the expectation of heavenly bliss and security; while Bosanquet, though he gloried in a present salvation of the kind which Christianity promises, treated the doctrine of personal immortality as a questionable and negligible element. Höffding cut down salvation to the maintenance of values, and did not even make it appear that it can be trusted for the conservation of the best of the values which man comes to possess as the reward of his earthly efforts and struggles. And if injustice has been done to the content of the religious idea of salvation, injustice has also been done to the context of the idea. It has been overlooked that a hope of salvation is inextricably bound up with the idea of a Divine Being who is adequate to the task of fulfilling the hope. I quoted from Bradley and Bosanquet striking tributes to the depth and the efficacy of the Protestant conception of the way of salvation, but they have not equally dwelt on the grandeur of the doctrine of God which was its presupposition;

and it may be said that the way of justification by faith only commended itself as it did to awakened consciences and anxious hearts because it was conjoined with the doctrine of the living God who is able and willing to save sinners, and who also embraces the soul in the individualising love of the Heavenly Father. In regard to the anthropological school it may be observed that, since the practical aim of religion came to be generally recognised, there has been a disposition to lay a one-sided emphasis on the self-regarding intention, and to ignore the other operative motives. It is therefore very necessary to enforce and illustrate the proposition which has been maintained in these lectures—viz., that in his religious life no less than in other departments of experience, and more than in almost any other, man has not merely pursued his real and imaginary interests, but has been moved by the call of duty, by the emotion of love, and by the hunger and thirst after light.

II

The truth of religion may be affirmed in three senses. Religion has its first principles or axioms which underlie the faiths that have governed the spiritual life of mankind, and the defence may take the form of a vindication of this general scheme of thought. Again, we may take religion to be represented by its highest form, as is done in parallel cases—when, for example, a judgment is expressed on the truths of Natural Philosophy or the value of Medicine and Surgery. When religion is taken to mean religion at its best, the question of truth resolves itself into the issue of the essential truth of Christianity. And further, as in Christianity everything depends on the validity of the idea of God, the issue may even be concentrated into the question of the truth of the

Christian idea of God. It does not fall within the scope of this book to make an elaborate contribution to theological Apologetics, and to the system of Christian Evidences; and I must content myself with outlining the cumulative argument in which I find a rational justification of my faith.

1. There is, in the first place, a strong presumption from analogy that the principles of religion are valid, and that the outcome of the historical process has been good and trustworthy. To put it at the lowest, religion must have served a useful function in the experience of the human species. It has been a universal factor in the life of nations, and when one form has decayed it has revived in another form; and this seems to be conclusive evidence that it has at least been advantageous to man in adapting him to his environment, and seconding his efforts after self-protection and self-expansion. Species of animals have come to be provided with hair and fur that keep them warm, and with offensive and defensive armour, while there are dens and caves of the earth in which they find shelter and security; and the beliefs and practices of the religious life must at least have helped to prevent human souls from being chilled to death by the cruel blasts that sweep their world, furnished them with useful weapons for the unceasing warfare of their lot, and made them to feel that in God there was a dwelling-place and a city of refuge. If counsel could have been taken with the utilitarian he would have had grave misgivings as to the expediency of endowing man with a religious nature. It would have been urged that it would darken and weaken man's spirit by the haunting fears which it fostered, and create a misplaced confidence in extraneous support for which the penalty would be paid in manifold failures and disasters, while it would also entail much loss of

time, and the unremunerative expenditure of wealth which man had painfully won in the sweat of his brow. It appears, however, that there must have been a decided balance of advantages even of the material kind—due in part to the circumstance that religion filled man with courage, gave him the sense of being more able to deal with a very difficult situation, and made him feel more at home in the oppressive terrestrial surroundings. Obviously also it has been useful in helping the human race towards the attainment of the higher values which were included in the programme that it was destined to realise ; for it has made a large contribution to the aesthetic and the moral life, and has also done much at certain stages to stimulate the energies of the intellectual life of mankind. And this specially holds of the influence which Christianity has had, as the perfected form of religion, in leavening the life and quickening the mind of the Western world.

Further, when we consider religion in general, and in particular when we consider Christianity as the ideal outcome of the historical process, it seems certain that the experience has been in touch with reality, and has been based on sound principles. This inference is justified by what Butler called the analogy of the course of nature. The bird was the product of a biological process ; as such it finds itself in possession of an apparatus which enables it to rise from the ground, to cleave the air in direct or circling flight, to poise itself on its wings, and to glide back to its perch ; and when this machinery was investigated by rational man, he found that it was founded on mechanical principles, and that if he also was to fly he must take lessons from the bird, and supplement them by the study of the structure and the movements of the fish. And if the power which

was operative in the production of living things, and in the equipment of the bird for the navigation of the air, is discovered to have made a successful use of the principles of Mechanics, it seems unlikely that when, in the historical process, the provision was perfected whereby the soul should traverse the spiritual sphere, and rise to communion with God, the mechanism should be found to be based on metaphysical principles which man, when his eyes are opened, must cast aside as palpable lies, or sorrowfully discard as groundless though comfortable illusions.

There is a further observation which may carry weight with those who have a healthy conviction of the rationality or trustworthiness of the general scheme of things. Religion, as was before observed, resembles the products of the biological realm in that it has moved towards an end that has the notes of excellence, beauty and utility, while it differs from them in that it claims to be also a scheme of truth ; and the presumption is that, as it is of its nature to seek to lay hold of and show forth truth, its advance towards perfection has involved an increasing fulness and clearness of knowledge concerning God and divine things. It may therefore be held that there is a strong *prima facie* case for the truth of the Christian ideas concerning God and salvation, and the other forms of the divine relationship, which have been transmitted to us as the outcome of man's age-long transactions with religion, and that it is a very reasonable view for a commonplace man to take, and even for a very able man, that more value is to be attached to the outcome of the historical process than to any judgment which he might be able to form for himself on the subject.

2. I observe in the next place that the sublimity of the doctrines in which religious thought culminated

creates a well-founded prepossession in favour of their truth. Religious thought, like the universe, is on the grand scale. At its highest reach it has been a magnificent handling of a magnificent theme.

The idea of God in its matured form is a contribution to Theoretical Philosophy of the first magnitude. It is in fact the greatest idea which is at the disposal of the mind when it seeks to understand and interpret existence as a whole, and to build up an Ontology. For this purpose two other ideas are available—to wit, the world and the self; but the idea of God far surpasses both since it incorporates the elements to which each owes its dignity, and at the same time exalts them to the degree which is appropriate to the all-perfect Being. As personal spirit, God has the same attributes as those in virtue of which the self is conscious of an immeasurable superiority to the world; and as the infinite Being He possesses them in a measure which inconceivably transcends even the standards of immensity that are suggested by the scale and the processes of the boundless universe. The idea of God, moreover, makes it possible to embrace the totality of existence in a satisfactory view, and to organise the knowledge of its structure and contents by reference to one supreme principle. The world and the self are unable to account for themselves, while the infinite Spirit, which must be thought of as self-existent, unifies the system as the power by which the world and the self have been brought into existence, and by which they are maintained in existence, and supplied with strength for their labours. It may, indeed, be said that God is needed, not merely as the ground of the world and of the self, but also as a mediator to protect them against each other, and arrange for a *modus vivendi*. For when the idea of God has been dispensed with, the result has

been either that the idea of the world has sought to destroy the idea of the self by the way of Materialism, or that the self has sought to get rid of the world by the way of Subjective Idealism. If the Theism of Berkeley did not protect the world against the self, at least it gave a tenable explanation of the objects of the phenomenal world as the products of the mind and will of the infinite Spirit ; while the world is in a much worse case under a Subjectivist Philosophy which knows not God, as it then sinks to the intolerable position of a phantasmagoria that has been inexplicably flung off by the occult potencies of a group of finite minds, or even of one petty individual mind. While Theism has subjected the world and the self to God as the ground of their existence, of their conservation and of their operations, it has conceded to them a certain independence, not only in relation to God, but also to one another. It may be added that the idea of God is a contribution of supreme importance to a Philosophy of History. It may be that a Science of History will be developed that will command general recognition and respect, but I do not believe that it will be found possible to interpret the meaning of history, and to appreciate the course and the goal, *i.e.* to construct a Philosophy of History, unless account is taken of divine purpose, and of a divine will which, working for the fulfilment of an end, guided and overruled the plans and the strivings of the rulers and peoples of the earth. Nor is the idea of God any less needed for a luminous and credible interpretation of the meaning of the life of the individual human being, which in one point of view is so majestic and in another so insignificant—which reaches out to the eternities and the infinities and upward to visions of divine goodness and beauty, and yet keeps company with the beasts, and withers as a leaf.

Religion has also made a spendid contribution to the materials of Practical Philosophy. While it has sought to grasp and explain the totality of things, it has taken to do no less confidently with the moral ideal and the conduct of life. The great religions identified themselves with a doctrine of the chief end of man, gave instruction as to the heads of duty in the various relationships of life, and lent all their support to the authority of conscience. Religion has in fact been the chief instrument in the elevation and the enrichment of ethical ideas. This it did in one way by emphasising a special set of duties which man owes to God in addition to those which he owes to himself and to his fellow-men. But it is also very notable that when morality became an integral part of religion and the moral code was edited with faith in God, the conception of duty towards the self and to other selves was greatly deepened and expanded, and virtues and graces came to honour which had been previously ignored or despised. The apostles of the great Indian religions persuaded the natural man to give a large place to self-denial and gentleness in his working-code of conduct. Inheriting the classical ideal which had as its staple prudence, courage, temperance and justice, Christianity added to them brotherly love and the passive virtues of humility and meekness; and it thus provided the Western world with an ideal which has had the approval of the general conscience, and which still has this approval in spite of the modern attempts that have been made to show that the Christian additions were either undesirable or impracticable, or neither desirable nor practicable. And if it be said that the Christian ideal has been more honoured in the breach than in the observance, it may be replied that it is the business of an ideal to rise high above average practice, and that it justifies itself if it

produces an earnest of better things to be, and fosters the spirit of a divine discontent. Moreover, religion has done much to supplement the vague natural inclination to be good by a reinforcement of moral earnestness and power. In the modern world, indeed, there is an opinion that morality can be detached from religion, and the opinion is being acted on in national experiments of secular education. But this is an extremely hazardous venture. 'At no time,' says Lord Balfour, 'has the mass of mankind treated morals and religion as mutually independent. They have left this to the enlightened, and the enlightened have (as I think) been wrong.' He adds the important observation that faith in God is needed, not merely as a check on bad impulses, but also for guidance in the choice which we have often to make among good ends—that 'when a man loves God he has found a moral end which reconciles other ends because it includes them, and the collision of ends for that soul loses all harshness.' [1]

The third impressive feature of the religious view of existence is the optimistic outlook. It is true, as was observed, that the foundations have been laid in Pessimism, but the structure has tended to the heights of an all-conquering optimism. In the Christian gospel great and precious promises were made—first to the individual, secondly to the Church, lastly to the race. To the individual it offered a present deliverance from the guilt and the power of sin and from the miseries which sin brings in its train, and to this was added the victory over death, which is to be crowned by the perfected purity and bliss of eternal life. To the Christian Church there was promise of participation in the power and the glory of its exalted Head, and to the nations of the blessings which flow from the rise and progress within

[1] *Theism and Humanism*, 1915, pp. 126 ff.

the world of the Kingdom of God. For the fulfilment of these hopes, moreover, adequate security was offered: expectations that would otherwise be deemed arrogant and unreasonable were made to seem reasonable in consideration that man is made in the image of God, and that the responsibility for fulfilling them is placed upon the God who is infinite in power, in wisdom and in goodness. It may also be deemed an optimistic feature of the religious scheme of thought that the conditions under which the divine favour is extended to man are known and are capable of fulfilment; and this conception assumed its boldest form in the Christian doctrine that salvation is the gift of God, and that in order to appropriate it nothing more is needed than a childlike trust in the divine mercy. Christian Theology has indeed shrunk from indulging a boundless optimism. There has always been a school which was prone to believe that, notwithstanding the leaven of the Kingdom of God, the world grows more and more evil, has reached the state of spiritual bankruptcy, and is ripe for judgment and doom. And the Church has strenuously affirmed the existence of an eternal Hell in which a multitude of human souls that no man can number will be plunged, along with the hosts of fallen angels, into hideous and hopeless ruin. This limitation of Christian optimism was felt to be imposed by the general teaching of the New Testament. And it was also felt to be required by respect for morality. Perhaps the greatest tribute that was ever paid to the majesty of the moral law was that which is implied in the doctrine that the breach of the moral laws of God, and even of one commandment, will be justly requited by eternal torments. It was felt, moreover, that one of the strongest restraints on evil-doing would be removed if it came to be the popular opinion that whether a man

served God or the Devil in time, it would be well with him in eternity. But these considerations are not conclusive. 'I have yet many things to say unto you,' it is written in the gospel, 'but ye cannot bear them now' (John xvi. 12); and one of these may have been said by the apostle when he declared that God will put all things in subjection under His feet, and that in the end God will be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 27-8). The prudential argument has lost much of its force in the latter-day Protestant world, which has, on the whole, taken upon itself to think that the doctrine of eternal punishment is negligible; and it is probable that more effect would be produced if the Church gave earnest warning of a temporary Hell which the worldly-minded and the carnally-minded have every reason to expect, than it does by clinging in theory to the doctrine of an everlasting Hell which few ministers have the courage to preach. It is quite likely that the Christian Theology of the future will allow a wider range to its instinctive optimism, and will hold that it will be brought about by the divine wisdom and love that in the end God will be all in all—and that in the sense not of the conqueror who has forcibly beaten down all opposition, but of the King who has come to reign in the hearts of devoted subjects.

3. The next step in the argument is that the truth of religion is vouched for by the self-evidencing power with which it has laid hold on the human mind. The most obvious reason why religion has been believed by man is, as Coleridge put it, that it found him, or, in Bosanquet's phrase, that he felt that this was the real thing. And the reason was a good one. The ground on which, as matter of psychological fact, religion has been believed to be true is a valid reason for holding that it is true.

The general scheme of religious thought—with its optimism based on faith in the Divine Being—has been accepted by mankind as authenticating and justifying itself. Religion has its first principles, of which it may be said, in the language of Reid, that 'if they do not admit of a direct proof, neither do they need it; for they are such as all men of common understanding know, or such at least as they give a ready assent to as soon as they are proposed and understood.'[1] It may not, indeed, be said that 'the common principles' of religion command the universal assent which is yielded to the laws of thought, and to the axioms and postulates of Mathematics, but as with the maxims of morality a lesser range of assent is sufficient. 'The one real question,' as Professor A. E. Taylor remarks in this connection, is 'not what certain persons are unable to feel the necessity of searching for, but what those who do seek find, *Sed quid invenientibus?*'[2] When, again, we consider religion as represented by its highest form, it seems certain that the reason why Christianity became the religion of the peoples of the Western world was that it apprehended the spiritual class as shining by its own light, and that it made a vague impression of a similar kind on the mind of the masses. No doubt a great variety of motives came into play in the propagation of Christianity, but in the last resort the explanation of its triumph was that its doctrine of God was immeasurably superior to any other, and that it gave the promise and the foretaste of a salvation which was richer in content, and also better guaranteed, than that which was offered by any competing system. In the third century of our era, it is said it was an open question whether Christianity or Mithraism was to prevail; but

[1] *The Intellectual Powers*, vol. i. chap. xi.

[2] Art. cit.

as Mithraism had staked everything on the ability of a legendary and semi-ethical being to give victory to the imperial arms, everything was lost when it failed to keep its promise; while Christianity had resources in its vision of God, in the self-attesting Christ, and in its moral ideal, which enabled it to maintain its hold on the mind through periods of national disaster and individual misery. In some epochs the sense of the intrinsic excellence of Christianity has been weakened, and it has even been obliterated in considerable groups, and in numerous individuals, but to this there has been an offset in the stated recurrence of the revival of spiritual experience, which was accompanied by a renewal of the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. In such periods, as notably at the Reformation, Christian Apologetic has fastened on the self-evidencing virtue of Christianity, interpreted it as the inward witness borne by the Holy Spirit, and relied on this as the palmary proof of the truth of the Christian Revelation. And I am disposed to think that the best reason which the Christian Church or the Christian man has for believing his religion to be true is that, made as he is and seeing in it what he sees, he is constrained to believe it to be true. To this reliance on the self-authenticating power of religion it is naturally objected that it proves too much. Other religions have also been heartily greeted as 'the real thing'; and as these contain tenets concerning God, and the content and the way of salvation which conflict with the Christian doctrines, it may be said that the inward assurance has no evidential value. But the assurance of the heathen world is explained in part by the fact that they hold what have been called the first principles of religion, and in part by the particular elements of truth and goodness which are embodied in every faith that has

been an influential factor in the spiritual history of the race. The religious assurance fostered in Hinduism is largely due to the fact that it makes man God-centred instead of self-centred, and the assurance of the Moslem to the fact that he knows and acts upon very important truths concerning God. And a similar observation may be made in regard to the discord and the divisions of Christendom. The good Roman Catholic has an assurance of the truth of his system which is at least as strong as that felt by the good Protestant, and it may be said that a criterion of truth is worthless which seems to give equal support to two parties that obstinately and violently differ from one another. But as a fact the assurance of both rests to a large extent on the same grounds. In both cases it is partly due to the self-evidencing character of the first principles of religion; but chiefly to the efficacy of the substance of Christianity which, to the extent of at least two-thirds, they are at one in holding against all gainsaying.

The element of the Christian system which may be most confidently held to shine by its own light is its doctrine of God. This was put in the front, with great effect, in the apologies of the Patristic Church. In the most convincing form of the ontological argument the starting point of the argument has been that the mind necessarily believes in God. It was the general doctrine of the Scottish School that the idea of God, when known and understood, lays a compulsion on the mind to believe it. Kant held that it was a necessary idea of reason, though he added that it could not be trusted for knowledge. But it is a very probable view that what man, as such, has felt compelled to believe when he has sympathetically grasped it, has been believed because it is true.

4. Belief in the truth of Christianity, while it primarily rests on the excellence and the efficacy of the doctrine, has been greatly strengthened by the observation of the extraordinary setting in which the doctrine was first published and propagated. The message which was delivered as the truth about God and salvation was bound up in an impressive synthesis along with the other values which the human spirit has coveted and treasured as of cognate dignity with truth. The elements that were thus linked with it were power, wisdom, goodness, and the beauty of holiness. The older Apologetic laid the greatest stress on accompanying marks of superhuman power as authenticating the teachings of the Gospel. The Scriptures report cycles of signs and wonders in connection with the great epochs of the Old Testament dispensation, while the miraculous series rises to its climax in the gospel narratives of the mighty works of Christ and of His resurrection from the dead ; and these events were interpreted as manifestations of supernatural power whereby the divine seal was set on the laws of Moses and the oracles of the prophets, and especially on the teaching of Christ and His apostles. At the present day it is a common opinion that miracles are antecedently impossible, that for the historian biblical wonders dissolve into myths and legends, and that even if prodigies had been performed they would have been irrelevant to the issue of truth. But the traditional argument may not be so summarily disposed of. On the question of historical fact it is obvious that the biblical writers did not clearly distinguish between miraculous and providential acts of God, and I conceive it must also be admitted that the Old Testament contains a considerable deposit of mythical and legendary elements. But there is still good reason

for believing that in the golden ages of religious history, when the experience of God reached its highest known level, there were displays of power in the spiritual realm, and also in the contiguous spheres of experience, such as do not occur, or at least in the same degree, in the ages of silver and iron. As regards the evidential value, it would be granted by the normal thinker—unless he were writing a polemical treatise—that if a prophet or an apostle was really endowed with supernatural powers he was thereby accredited as a messenger from the supernatural world. And the argument has certainly wrought conviction; for one of the reasons why the Church came into existence was that it was believed that Christ had wrought works which no man could do except God was with him, and especially that He had been declared to be the Son of God with power by resurrection from the dead. Evidences of a supernatural wisdom have also been relied on as authenticating Christianity to the reasoning mind. In the patristic period and again in the eighteenth century the argument from prediction was often put in the forefront—the contention being that those who had a knowledge of the future were thereby accredited as witnesses to God. In recent times this argument has fallen into the background—partly because a prediction might be explained as the expectation which was formed on the ground of what one believed God to be, partly because it was found that much that had been written about the Old Testament predictions and their fulfilments was dependent on unscholarly exegesis. But while it is certain that the Scriptures do not give us chapters of detailed history written before the event, it is still a very tenable view that the prophetic vision of the course and the goal of human history, and of the means and the manner of the establishment of the

Kingdom of God—running counter as it did to the pessimistic outlook which prevailed in the ancient world—was due to an extraordinary insight into the purposes and the ways of the God of history which was given to those who lived in a unique intimacy with the God of salvation. There are fashions in Apologetics, because of the changing fashions of the age to which it has to address itself, and it is quite possible that the argument from prophecy will be rehabilitated. If the future, as is commonly held by the theist, lies naked and open to God, it must be possible for His thoughts about it to find some entrance into finite minds ; and that this actually happened can be affirmed on the grounds that the thinking of the prophets about the future had the note of majesty, and that their general view of the trend and the goal of history has been confirmed. And there are other fields in which it has seemed that religion owed a debt to a higher intelligence. The Christian doctrine of man, it has been held, is so profound and illuminating, while in its teaching about sin it rises so far above natural ways of thinking, that it is difficult to suppose that it has been evolved by the wisdom of this world.

Most striking and significant of all, however, was the way in which, at the culminating stages of religious history, the doctrine was bound up with goodness. It was a vital note of the religion of the Old Testament that the speaker for God was also the representative of the noblest morality. The claim to the knowledge of God, and the immovable certitude with which the claim was advanced, were combined with a moral passion of extraordinary intensity which continued unabated in the school of the prophets through several centuries. And if the universe be a system in respect of the greater things as well as of the lesser things, it

is difficult to suppose that among the products which it flung off there were minds which in their thoughts about duty and its sovereign claims were sublimely right, but which in their thoughts about God and in their piety were pitiably in the wrong. It is more credible that the reason why the religious message and the unique moral fervour were joined together in their experience was that truth and goodness are essentially akin, and delight to dwell together. And this consideration, as I think, grows into a compelling argument when we consider Him who said that 'no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him,' and whose title to be believed was supported by stainless purity and self-sacrificing love as well as by the compelling beauty of holiness. Apart even from the prepossessions of faith, our sense of the fitness of things may well dispose us to think it incredible that the universe could have confronted us with the dilemma of having to choose between being deceived about divine things in the school of Jesus and Paul, or of being wise in the company, say, of Voltaire, or Schopenhauer or Nietzsche. The Christian Church, we may feel sure, has not judged unreasonably when it has held that He whom it supremely revered and loved because of His perfect goodness could also be trusted to be the revealer of the mind and the heart of the Eternal.

5. The idea of God which is the basis of the Christian Gospel, and may even be said to be its substance, is supported by rational proofs founded on the manifestations of the Divine Being in the works of Creation and Providence. The Christian doctrine, as has been said, is in possession, and it came into possession in a legitimate and convincing way. When we inquire how it obtained the position which it has held for

centuries in the mind of the Western world, it appears that it was a legacy from the people which was distinguished as the elect repository of religious genius, that it was welcomed by every type of the religious subject and specially by the types which have the leadership in spiritual things,that it prevailed over every other conception of the Deity which had emerged in the heathen faiths or which had been propounded in the philosophical schools, and that it has been the accompaniment and to a large extent the inspiration of the richer development of the moral life, not to speak of the intellectual and aesthetic life, of the nations which during the last two thousand years have been in the van of the progressive civilisation. And it is in similar fashion that the idea got established in the mind of the believing individual of our race and age. It came to him by way of inheritance as the most sacred element of his spiritual patrimony ; he was asked to believe it on the authority of the family, of the community, and of the ancient and world-wide society which is the witness to divine things ; it bespoke credence by its self-evidencing power and by the satisfaction which it gave to the religious instinct ; and it was probably also commended by the observation that God meant most to those in whom otherwise one had found most to revere. And with this went the experience that to do good was to be near God, and that to do evil meant to depart from Him or to be driven from His presence. While, however, this idea of God was not the product of reflection and inference, and while it has not to any great extent been propagated by argument, after it was in possession it was weighed in the balances of reason, and was found to be abundantly capable of vindication on distinctively rational lines.

The ratiocinative mind has done much work in the religious field in the discharge of its office, and much of it has been critical and destructive. The paths and the bypaths of history are strewn with the debris of religious systems which reason undermined and defaced, and rendered unfit for human habitation. Under the reign of Christianity there have been epochs when reason was fettered and silenced ; but during the first three centuries of the Church's existence its doctrine lay open to the assaults of the ancient schools of Philosophy, while the modern world has conceded untrammelled freedom of criticism and speculation, and has even crowned with undying fame the thinkers who made the most courageous use of their intellectual liberty. In the course of the discussions a number of anti-theistic theories have been propounded and defended in the name of reason ; and at different periods, and notably in recent times, these have influenced wide circles of the world of culture, while the cruder forms have had some success in popular propaganda. It is noteworthy, however, that there has been no agreement as to the alternative doctrine by which Theism was to be replaced. For while the theistic doctrine is burdened with problems, it has been obvious to all save to partisans that still greater difficulties are raised by every other theory of the ultimate reality, and of its relation to the world and man ; and when it has been proposed to end the controversy by shelving Metaphysics and being content with a world of phenomena, it was generally felt to be unworthy of man, and inconsistent with the lofty vocation which is otherwise so strongly attested, that he should seek deliverance from the intellectual travail in the *ignoramus et ignorabimus* of Agnosticism. On a long view of intellectual history it may be affirmed that the Christian

conception of God and the world has been supported by the representatives of rational thought. On the whole, Philosophy has accepted the idea of God as the Infinite Spirit, almighty, all-wise and all-good, has employed it as the foundation and the crown of the ontological system, and has vindicated it by collecting proofs from every division and aspect of the cosmos, and from every element and activity of the spiritual constitution of man. It is true that there has been much difference in the judgments formed as to the cogency of the various forms of theistic proof; but there has been general agreement that the conclusion was sound, and that, if one argument or set of arguments had to be discarded, the defences could be strengthened in other ways and made impregnable. And even those who, following Kant, have declared that all proofs were fallacious, have also frequently agreed with him in declaring that, if the theoretical reason failed them, the practical reason was able, as the custodian of the interests of the moral life, to lay a sure foundation for faith in God. And this witness from history is of great weight as against the pretensions of any anti-theistic school to obtain credit as the representative of enlightenment. It is well to exercise private judgment, and to think out matters, if we can, to the bottom; but the most self-reliant thinker ought to feel suspicious of his conclusions if he has been led to embrace a metaphysical or anti-metaphysical doctrine which has only had a sectional and temporary vogue, and which is in conflict with the general finding of the successive generations of 'the masters of them that know.'

The idea of God, I have said, is in possession with an excellent title; and this fact ought to be recognised as the presupposition of the rational debate. In consideration of the grounds on which it came into posses-

sion, and has remained in possession, the just view is that it should continue to be believed unless it can be demonstrated to be false, not that it should be disbelieved unless it can be demonstrated to be true. And certainly it has not been shown to be false. When the theistic proofs have been rejected it has usually been either because the demonstration demanded was of a kind that is inappropriate to the subject-matter of the investigation, or because an argument which supports part of the case does not prove the whole case. If, on the other hand, it be granted, as was forcibly urged by Flint, that particular heads of the doctrine may be separately established, and the separate findings combined in the final verdict, and if it be further granted, as Butler contended, that we should be satisfied with the degree of assurance known as moral certainty, it may be confidently said that the rational arguments strongly confirm the doctrine of God which was enshrined in the Christian religion, and which took captive the mind of the dominant division of the human race.

The rational tests of the theistic doctrine are two. The first question is whether it is self-consistent. The fundamental moments of the idea are infinitude and personality. And these, it has often been urged, are contradictory : if God be infinite He is not a person, if He be a person He is not infinite. The argument is of a kind for which I cannot feel great respect. The same kind of reasoning may very well be employed by a school of thought in some remote province of the universe in order to prove that the report of the existence of such a being as man is unfounded, where it may be deemed an inherent impossibility that a being should exist who has both a spiritual nature and a material body. There are good grounds for affirming that God is the Infinite Being, and also for affirming that He is a

Personal Being; and if we find it impossible that He should unite the two characters, the likelihood is that it is our intelligence that is at fault, and also that the imperfections of the instrument of language have some responsibility for the objection. The objection seems to me to be much less convincing than the observation of Lotze—that infinitude, so far from being inconsistent with personal being, is rather the condition of personality being raised to its highest power, and realising the perfection of its idea.

The second rational test is to inquire whether the theistic doctrine is consonant with the facts of the universe and of human life. The doctrine is that there exists a Divine Being clothed with natural, intellectual and moral perfections; and the question is whether this is supported or contradicted by the relevant evidence from the fields of nature and history in which it is believed that God lives a great part of the divine life, and performs most of His works. When this procedure is followed it is found that there is evidence which supports each of the heads of the theistic doctrine, and that the different lines of evidence combine to form a powerful cumulative argument.

The existence of a Supreme Being of some order, to begin with, is an obvious inference from the general character of the scheme of things. Unless we resolve on principle to recognise nothing but phenomena, we find ourselves compelled to think of an ultimate reality which, whether it be of the nature of matter, or energy, or spirit, or different from all, is the ground of the universe and of all that it contains. Again, as the universe is a cosmos, in which law and order prevail, from the realms of the infinitely great to those of the infinitely little, the belief that the Deity is one God is put beyond reasonable doubt. On the same ground, and with equal confidence, it can be

maintained that the Supreme Being is omnipresent. Further, the fact that something now exists makes it certain that something has always existed—since otherwise there would have been a point at which beings that as yet were not had been able to bring themselves into existence; and it must be supposed that this Eternal Being is identical with the Supreme Being. Again, one of the most obvious and most impressive facts about the universe is that there operates in it a power which is immeasurable in its might as it is boundless in its sweep, and this power we cannot but attribute to the Being that is supreme, one and eternal. At the next stage we reach the crucial question as to whether the evidence from the universe and its contents confirms the religious belief that the Deity is a spiritual Being, and that the stupendous power has been employed with knowledge, and under the guidance of wisdom. This was the conclusion of the teleological argument, which interpreted the order and adaption traceable in every department of existence as due to the operations of a divine mind. The prestige of the argument has indeed considerably declined since it was contended by Kant that the understanding cannot reach so far with its categories, and especially since it was made to appear that the results could be reached without intelligence through the mechanism of cosmical and biological evolution. But when we reflect on the mechanism as a whole, on the results which have been produced by it, and on the ends which it has served, it appears to me to be as certain as on the hypothesis of immediate creation that it presupposes a divine intelligence, and that the universe remains the embodiment and the handiwork of reason. If the evolutionary doctrine be true in its main features—and we have passed the stage at which it is possible to offer any objection save that a naturalistic doctrine of evolution is not the whole truth—it

may well be thought that we have more cause than ever to bow in adoring reverence before the wisdom of the Supreme Being. It is, further, an important piece of evidence that man is himself an intelligent being, as it is unlikely that the Supreme Being should be inferior in point of dignity to His late and lowly creature. And the evidence is similar in regard to the moral attributes. The thesis of the Old Testament prophets still holds that the power which rules in history is on the side of righteousness—that, when long views are taken, the history of the world is seen to be the judgment of the world. And, as before, it is natural to hold that the sovereign Power which, when it brought man into being, endowed him with a moral nature, and gave him a vision of duty and a conscience, cannot have raised up a censor to despise or arraign a sub-moral or immoral Creator, but must rather itself be the prototype of goodness. As regards the general attribute of infinity, it cannot be said that the doing of God in a universe which is probably finite proves that the Divine Being is infinite in power, in wisdom and in goodness ; but His attributes are at least made to appear so great that they are presumably infinite, and in addition the mind of man has been so constituted that necessity is laid upon it to believe that, in respect of every attribute, God is all-perfect. There remains a branch of evidence which, though it has scarcely figured in the rational discussion, is of the highest importance—I mean the verification of the doctrine which has taken place in experience. That there is a living God who is mighty, wise and good is a theory which is being constantly put to the proof, and with the result that those who habitually base their lives on it tend to become ever more assured of its truth, while the most confident testimony to the wisdom and the love of God has been received from those who were

of the number of the destitute, the afflicted and the tormented. 'The lives of the saints,' says Professor A. E. Taylor, 'are the real answer of Theism to the last insistent perplexities of the doubter who lurks in all of us.'[1] And it is not only the saints who rejoice in the corroboration. Some of us who are far from being saints have found that, as the outcome of the chequered experiences of this mortal life, we had a growing conviction of the existence of a God who by His providence besets us behind and before, who deals with us with mingled mercy and judgment, and who not least gives ground for believing in His wisdom.

6. The idea of salvation, which is also an integral part of the religious scheme of thought, and notably of the final religion, has had a considerable measure of support from the rational side. It is based on the optimistic principle; and optimism has had the general support of the philosophical schools, as well as the instinctive support of the masses of mankind. It is only in times of extraordinary calamity, or again in times of unusual prosperity, luxury and security—as in the latter half of last century—that any large measure of favour has been shown for the pessimistic doctrine that existence as such is a curse. Further, the doctrine of immortality, which is a very important part of the doctrine of salvation, has been generally favoured by Philosophy. And though belief in personal immortality has undoubtedly weakened in the modern civilised world, this doctrine may still be said to be an article of the universal creed. On the other hand, it cannot be said that the intellectual school has shown much appreciation of the specific elements of the Christian doctrine of salvation. 'By grace are ye saved through faith,' said Paul, 'and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God'; and there has

[1] *Op. cit.*

seemed to be more truth in the Aristotelian tenet that the just shall live by habits, and in the dictum of Epicharmus that labour is Heaven's price for all good things.[1] Nor has there been much appreciation of the Christian boons of redemption, reconciliation and the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. In recent times, moreover, there has been a marked decay of the sense of sin, with the consequence that little need is felt of any deliverance on the heroic scale of a redemption; while even the genuine religious experience is not of such a depth as to make it appear to be the earnest of a great salvation. Besides, the extraordinary achievements of modern man have predisposed him to self-sufficiency even in the spiritual sphere. He has accomplished such marvellous things by his genius and industry for the improvement of his condition, that it has been natural to suppose that it lies with himself to do everything that is possible for the promotion of human well-being and happiness, and that what he cannot do for himself is not likely to be done at all. It is therefore not surprising that there has been a marked decline of the old evangelical type of piety, which made so much of the nature and conditions of salvation; and that religion has tended to run into the two forms which I called obligational and emotional, in which it is able to survive without any great hope in God, and also without much light about God. There is undoubtedly a great deal of the religion of obligation, represented by a vast company of unpretending men and patient women, who accept duty as the supreme law of their Maker, and whose piety is attested by faithfulness in their calling, and by brave endurance of the grim decrees of Heaven. Also, the

[1] τῶν πόνων πωλοῦσιν ἡμῖν
πάντα τἀγάθ' οἱ θεοί. Xenophon, *Mem.*, II. I. 20.

world is full of a love for things bright and beautiful and good, which according to St. Thomas is an indirect love of the Giver ; and there is also much love of holy things and Christ-like people, while mankind uniquely loves, and will continue so to love, the Son of Man. And it is a welcome observation that religion is able to maintain itself under unfavourable conditions by assuming diverse forms which, if they fall short of the fulness of the idea, serve the end of keeping souls in touch with God, and preserving a certain receptiveness for divine gifts of life and light.

It may, however, be considered certain from historical precedents that a different spiritual situation will supervene. It is an outstanding feature of history that the period of extraordinary secular achievement has alternated with the period of extraordinary religious intensity. In the one phase, a nation or an age has felt a great access of self-confidence, and has put forth its powers with astonishing energy on the tasks and the problems of this world ; in the other, man has deeply realised his insufficiency in presence of the greatest of his tasks as well as the worst of the evils of his estate, and he has cast himself anew on the compassion and the help of God. The secular effort was splendidly illustrated in the epoch of classical antiquity which on the theoretical side gave rise to the Philosophy and the Science of Greece, and on the practical side built up the Roman Empire ; while the religious experience was represented by the reawakening of spiritual life which occurred in the later centuries of the Roman Empire, and which had its chief monument in the rise and the triumph of the Christian religion. In the early Middle Ages there was a new secular effort when the youthful nations which had come on the scene

threw themselves into adventure and conquest and the building of States; and in the later Middle Ages there followed a period of disillusionment and world-weariness when many of the noblest fled to the cloister, and it seemed even to the multitude for a season that religion was the one thing needful. In the Renaissance there was a revival of the spirit of classical antiquity, while at the Reformation the religious mood reasserted itself, and persisted in strength to the seventeenth century. During the last two centuries the race has put forth its powers in its crowning endeavour to establish its intellectual and practical dominion over the world; and at the same time its outlook has been preponderantly secular—save for the reminder which was given, as in the Evangelical Revival and the Oxford Movement, of the postponed needs and the slumbering potencies of the spiritual life. And the two phases have not only alternated: each has prepared the way for the other. It is probable that in the period of intense religious experience there was generated a new supply of spiritual energy by which a nation was equipped for fresh ventures and labours, and which it could turn to account in many spheres. It has been observed in the history of families that the piety of one generation often flowers in the next in intellectual talent and even in physical prowess, and this would seem to be a parable of the life of nations. The golden age of Greece may have its explanation in the religious revival of the preceding period; and the brilliant modern age owes more than it suspects to the deepening of its spiritual life which took place in the Middle Ages, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the other hand, a period of magnificent human effort is naturally followed by some exhaustion and weariness, as well as by a sense of disappointment at

the spiritual results attained, and at the oppressive evils that remain in the ravages of sin, sorrow and death. And so mankind realises anew its need of God, and is ready for a baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. It is therefore to be expected that another Sabbath will come round in the midst of the centuries when there will be a general turning to God for comfort and refreshment of soul. And when it takes place, the general mind will again make the more courageous ventures of faith, whereof the most characteristic is to believe that God is the author of a great salvation, and that they who put their trust in Him shall never be confounded. Further, this will be accompanied, as in the past, by a fresh experience of the self-witness of God, and of the self-evidencing power of the truth.

> Our hearts, if God we seek to know,
> Shall know Him, and rejoice;
> His coming like the morn shall be,
> Like morning-songs His voice.

A revival of religion will also be welcome for the reinforcement of the moral energies of the race. The world owes an incalculable debt to the Church, whose faith has moulded many of the best men and women who take part in the work of each generation, and has inspired countless forms of Christ-like ministration to the children of affliction. Every quickening of the religious life of Europe has increased these contributions, and even more may be expected when next the Spirit is poured out on all flesh. For every great religious period has had something distinctive; and it is probable that the distinction of the next will be the extent to which the energies generated by faith in the God of salvation will be devoted to the service of God in the service of man. It is inconceivable that any great spiritual movement of the future should be

bound up with what was called the fugitive ideal of salvation. Rather will it build on the foundation laid by the Reformers, and work for a Kingdom of God which puts first the spiritual blessings of the gospel, but also includes the highest ideal of human culture and the noblest programme of social well-being. And at the present stage it is difficult to think of a better gift that could be made to the world than to raise up a great body of men who, believing in God with all their minds, should make it the governing and passionate purpose of their lives that God's Kingdom may come, and His will be done, in earth as it is in Heaven. And further, if such a generation should arise under the banner of religion, it will be felt that Heaven has again set its seal to the truth of religion.

In this chapter I have referred to many branches of evidence bearing on the validity of the religious view of existence, on the claim of Christianity to be the final religion, and on the truth of the idea of God. And the fact that there is so much evidence from so many different fields is of itself a very weighty proof. But for the same reason it is only the few who can profess to undertake an exhaustive investigation, and to offer a reasoned judgment on the whole case. The overwhelming majority, if they have to render a reason, necessarily fall back on some authority—as the faith of their fathers, the doctrine of their Church, or, at some points, the consent of the race, and the consent of the sages. And it is well that there are authorities which represent matured collective judgments ; and on the whole it is wise, as in other spheres, to trust the best authority which is in sight. But, on the other hand, it is the peculiarity of the highest religion that it appeals for personal conviction, and also that it can be subjected

to certain important tests which are carried out by persons with very ordinary attainments and opportunities. They can search the Scriptures, bring to them a receptive mind, and treasure as their peculiar possession those doctrines which they have found to shine by their own light and which have laid a spell upon their souls. They can test in their experience the offers of pardon and peace and victory over sin which are made in the name of God, and also the promise of Him who said, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' They can verify the assertion that God is the hearer and the answerer of those prayers which seek the glory of God and the highest good of His children. And they can make trial of the method of confirmation which was proposed in the gospel when it was written that if any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.

# INDEX


ABELARD, 327, 421.
Absolute, the, 144, 356 ff.
Adamson, R., 370.
Aeschylus, 235.
Agnosticism, 368 ff., 374.
Albertus Magnus, 293.
Alexander, Prof. S., 11, 62, 100.
Amenhotep IV., his ethical monotheism, 66.
Ancestor-worship, 362 ff.
Anglican Church, theory of an implicit faith, 318; Thirty-nine Articles, 410.
Animals, worship of, 346.
Animism, fear in, 82; evil spirits and, 139; its religious motive, 195; and the sentiment of duty, 233; and the desire of knowledge, 319; general doctrine of, 360; psychological basis of, 361; use of spells and charms in, 392.
Apologetics, Christian, 483.
*A priori*, doctrine of the religious, 169.
Aquinas, Thomas, 315, 326.
Aristophanes, 225.
Arnold, Matthew, his definition of religion, 254.
Asceticism, in the ancient Church, 241.
Athanasius, 421.
Augustine, St., his conversion, 241; on the kingdoms of this world, 272; belief in the sovereignty of God, 380; and the evangelical tradition, 409.
Augustinianism, 50.
Aurelius, Marcus, 252, 257, 260.

BALFOUR, Lord, on the interdependence of morals and religion, 479.
Bede, on Paulinus' visit to Eadwine, 319.
Bergson, on the contrast between instinct and intelligence, 105; on intuition, 108; *L'Évolution Créatrice*, 350.
Bernard, St., on the discipline of mysticism, 296.
Bhagavad-Gita, the, 202, 223, 236, 276, 287.
Biel, Gabriel, 327.
Bosanquet, B., 382, 411.
Bradley, F. H., 411.
Brahmanism, on the vocation of old age, 1; aim of, 199 ff.; love for the divine in, 276, 302; knowledge the watchword of, 311, 321; moral code of, 397; *v.* Pantheism.
Browning, Robert, 333.
Buddha, the, temptation of, 176; the enlightenment of, 180; and the way of salvation, 186, 287, 321; on the misery of human life, 200; his renunciation of earthly goods, 201; his moral code, 397; devotion of his followers, 275, 408.
Buddhism, aim of, 199 ff.; obligatory aspect of, 236; the place of knowledge in, 311, 321; the five commandments of, 397; *v.* Pantheism.

CAIRD, E., *The Evolution of Religion*, 340.
Calvin, John, 168, 219, 244, 257, 291, 316, 328, 380, 422.
Calvinism, its economic importance, 246; a bulwark against Pantheism, 376, 379.
Canonisation, 57.
Carlyle, on the wonder of the universe, 17; on reverence, 254; on Scandinavian mythology, 349.

Carpenter, on unconscious cerebration, 131.
Carr, 106.
Chalmers, Dr., 247.
Christ *v.* Jesus.
Christianity, 27; its relation to the State, 66; and moral ideals, 256; a gospel of divine sonship, 274; as love to Jesus, 278, 281; and the Pantheistic type of mysticism, 289; affirms the necessity of knowledge, 313; as the absolute religion, 378, 463; essence of, 461 ff.; diverse interpretations of, 464 ff.
Church, the, 216, 219-220; as collective subject, 68 ff.; its limitations, 72.
Cicero, 229.
Cleanthes, hymn of, 260.
Clement of Alexandria, 240, 325-6, 441.
Coe, Prof., analysis of abnormal experiences, 174.
Comte, on the function of religion, 305, 331.
Confession, the Augsburg, 410, 412, 417; the Westminster, 417.
Confucius, 89, 97, 249-51.
Conversion, instruments of, 42; nature of, 44 ff.; of St. Augustine, 241; of St. Francis of Assisi, 241.
Coué, Emile, principles of, 128.
Creed, the Apostles', 314; the Athanasian, 314.

D'Alviella, 342.
Dante, 412.
Davidson, Prof. W. L., survey of Gifford literature, 10.
Deism, eighteenth century, 329.
Dhammapada, the, 223.
Dogmatism, 3.
Donne, 303.
Drever, Dr., 76, 84.
Duns Scotus, 327.
Duty to God, religion as, chap. vii. *passim*; Howe on, 245.

Eleatics, 353.
Epictetus, 252, 255.
Epochs, alternation of religious and secular, 498.
Euripides, 225.
Evangelical revival, 27, 51, 247.
Evangelicalism, 48, 247-8, 281.
Evolution of man, 436 ff.
Exorcism, 122, 392.

Faith, condition of salvation in Christianity, 313, 408; in Polytheism, 407; in Brahmanism, 407; doctrine of justification by, 409 ff.; its bearing on morals, 413; its bearing on sacramental rites, 419.
Fénelon, 243.
Feuerbach, on happiness as the aim of religion, 191; on the utilitarian aim of religion, 224.
Fichte, on self-regarding religion, 221.
Flint, R., 4, 22; on the objects of religious faith, 339; on organic Pantheism, 349.
Fox, George, 181.
Francis, St., of Assisi, 241; of Sales, 243, 282.
Franklin, Benjamin, 364.
Frazer, Sir James, on the theoretical contribution of religion, 305; definition of, 307; on the practical aim of religion, 307; on the priest and the magician, 383; on Totemistic sacrifice, 391.
Freud, 124, 126.

Galloway, Principal, 465.
Gardner, Prof. Percy, ritual of the Mysteries, 403.
Gifford Lectures, scope of, 9 ff.
Gnosticism, 241, 328.
God, as First Cause, 15; and the reign of law, 227; majesty of, 237; as Lawgiver, 237; abandonment to the will of, 242; as object of love, chap. viii. *passim*; man's visions of, chap. x. *passim*; and history, 339; classification of ideas concerning, 341; value of ideas concerning, 370 ff.; theistic conception of, 367, 377; grounds of belief in, 489; consistency of idea of, 493; attributes of, their rational confirmation, 494 ff.
Goethe, on reverence as the essence of religion, 254; on divine immanence, 354.

Hamilton, Sir W., on memory, 114, 115.

Harrison, Miss J., 405.
Hegel, 22, 25; on the object of religion, 304; the religious position confirmed by philosophy, 305; on the importance of dogmas, 329; his view of the Absolute, 357; on the evolution and goal of religion, 466 ff.
Heiler, 55.
Hinduism, 407.
History, religious, 439 ff.
Hobbes, 261, 430.
Hodge, 329.
Höffding, 22, 47; on religion as a conservation of values, 85, 192.
Hooker, 411.
Howe, emphasis on duty to God, 245.
Hume, David, scepticism of, 3, 4, 132; on fear as the motive of religion, 261, 429; rejection of the intellectual theory of the origin of religion, 307.

IDEA of God, theory of innate, 168.
Ideas, diversity of religious, 458 ff.; sublimity of religious, 475 ff.
Idols, 343.
Imagination, native to the religious mind, 164.
Immortality, the corollary of the O.T. doctrine of God, 211; Mohammed's teaching on, 212; St. Paul's teaching on, 215.
Inspiration, modes of, 178 ff.
Instinct, transcendental implications of, 104; and intelligence, 105; the religious, 98, 167.
Instincts, religion and the, chap. iii. *passim*; appeal of religion to the, 74 ff.
Islam, its sects, 71; as a religion of obligation, 238-9; *v.* Mohammed.

JAMES, WILLIAM, 12, 32, 39; on saintliness, 53; on instinct, 75; on the subconscious, 111; on the self, 119; on warring theologies, 188.
Jesus Christ, as God incarnate, 56, 289, 378, 462; His sense of filial obligation, 239; love towards, 277-8; attitude of the Reformers to, 279; importance He attached to knowledge of the truth, 313; enmity of the Jewish Church to, 385; His sacrifice, 420 ff.
Jevons, on Totemism, 432.
Johnson, Dr., 308.

KANT, on the limitation of knowledge, 161; on the idea of God, 168; on Christian doctrines, 187; on religion and human interests, 190; on religion and duties, 230; on the divinity of Christ, 330; on the Atonement, 330; on faith, 411.
Knowledge, its place in religion, chap. ix. *passim*.
Knox, John, 3, 219.
Krishna, 276.

LACTANTIUS, 230.
Lang, Andrew, 434.
Leechman, 247.
Leuba, on the genesis of mysticism, 302.
Light, religion as, chap. ix. *passim*.
Logos, the, 240.
Love of God, religion as, chap. viii. *passim*.
Loyola, Ignatius, illumination of, 181.
Lucian, 401.
Lucretius, 26, 27, 225, 261, 429.
Luther, 5, 279, 385, 411.

M'DOUGALL, Dr., on instinct, chap. iii. *passim*; denial of religious instinct, 98.
Mach, on fear as the motive of religion, 261.
Mackintosh, Prof. H. R., 37, 134.
Magic, the practice of, 389 ff.
*Mana*, 350-1, 432.
Manichaeism, 365.
Manu, Laws of, 1.
Marett, Dr., on the Melanesian *mana*, 351; on the prayer element in incantations, 383; on the spell, 390; on Manism, 432.
Materialism, 132, 369, 373-4.
Melanchthon, criticisms of the Scholastic theologians, 328.
Melanesia, religious ideas, 350.
Miracles, argument from, 485.
Mithraism, 403, 482.
Moderatism, 247-8.

Mohammed, his vision, 176; intellectual life of, 180; influence of, 186; his view of salvation, 211-12; his sense of the majesty of God, 238; his ethical doctrine, 398.
Monism, types of, 289.
Monotheism, and salvation, 195, 207; and Polytheism, 347; early forms of, 366.
Morgan, Professor Lloyd, 10, 78, 100.
Müller, Max, 431.
Mystery Religions, 403 ff.
Mysticism, an emotional type of piety, 48; and inspiration, 182; as love of God, 282; Pantheistic type of Christian, 289; the mystical saints, 292 ff.; Leuba on the genesis of, 302.
Mythology, Classical, 352; Scandinavian, 348, 352, 366, 392.

NATION, as a religious subject, 64 ff.
Naturalism, 10.
Neo-evangelicalism, 248.
Neo-platonism, 263, 282, 285.
Newton, John, 281.
Nirvana, 202, 287.

OBEDIENCE, moral, as a way of salvation, 396.
Oesterreich, analysis of forms of divine manifestations, 175.
Oldenberg, 383.
Optimism, of religion, 479.
Otto, on the religious *a priori*, 170.

PANTHEISM, and salvation, 194; the aim of the Brahman and Buddhist forms of, 199-207; its saints, 285; its rules for attaining union with God, 286; Christian, 289; agnostic, 289, 369; gnostic, 290; its depreciation of natural obligations, 298; and Polytheism, 365; its different views of the nature of the Divine Being, 353 ff.; its religious inadequacy, 375-7.
Paul, St., and revelation, 181; his sense of religious obligation, 240; on love, 266; on knowledge, 313, 324; on faith, 409; his interpretation of religious history, 449 ff.
Pelagianism, 50, 447.
Personality, disintegration of, 135; menaced by Pantheism, 375.
Pessimism, the presupposition of religious optimism, 200, 207.
Pfleiderer, 22, on the aim of religion, 191; on the origin of religion, 307.
Philosophy, Indian, 353.
Philosophy of Religion, types of, 10; the basis of, 13; the method of, 19; function of, 338; influence of that of St. Paul, 449 ff.
Pietism, and spiritual revival, 280; strictures on, 300; German, 330.
Pindar, 235.
Plato, 118, 124, 165, 235, 265, 401, 404, 405.
Plotinus, on the soul's love of God, 263; on love as an intoxication, 285.
Pluralism, 12.
Polydaemonism, and salvation, 194; belief in *mana*, 351; in Africa and Australia, 364; attempts to deceive evil spirits, 388.
Polytheism, 65, 82; and individualism, 198; and a future state, 198; importance of the priesthoods in, 310; Semitic, 348; and Nature-worship, 352; its influence, 364-5; and conduct, 396.
Positivism, 305, 369.
Prayer, of Cleanthes, 260; and incantation, 383; as a means of conciliation, 393-4; the power of, 394 *n.*; necessary in ethical religion, 399; vital in the religion of faith, 420; a test of the truth of religion, 502.
Prediction, argument from, 486.
Prince, Dr. Morton, on the subconscious, 116; case of *Miss Beauchamp*, 120.
Pringle-Pattison, Professor A. S., 11.
Proofs, theistic, their cumulative force, 493; their corroborative use, 493 ff.
Protestantism, its attitude to scripture, 160; its attitude to religious knowledge, 315, 329; the soteriological issue, 385, 415; its moral influence, 417 ff.
Psycho-analysis, its parallels in

Christian teaching, 128 ; and the unconscious, 133.
Psychology, of religion, 32 ff. ; social, 61 ff.
Punishment, eternal, 480-1.
Purgatory, 416, 419.

RATIONALISM, eighteenth-century, 304.
Rauwenhoff, 230.
Raymond of Sabunde, 16.
Reformation, the central issue, 385, 415 ff.
Reformers, the, attitude to Christ, 279 ; *v.* Protestantism.
Reid, Thomas, 3, 8, 136.
Religion and character, 26 ; its appeal, 28 ; psychology of, 32 ff. ; attitude of man, as man, to, 41 ; attitude of the convert to, 42 ; attitude of the saint to, 52 ; and the natural community, 65 ; and the ecclesiastical community, 68 ; and the instincts, chap. iii. *passim*; and the subconscious, chap. iv. *passim* ; and poetry, 165 ; the chief end of, chap. vi. *passim* ; and values, 192-3 ; optimism of, 192, 479 ; provisional pessimism of, 192, 208, 212, 479 ; the means to the *summum bonum*, 221 ; strictures on, 221-7 ; as duty to God, chap. vii. *passim* ; etymology of, 229-30 ; obligation type of, 232 ff. ; as love of God, chap. viii. *passim* ; aesthetic explanations of, 261-2 ; as light, chap. ix. *passim* ; as defined by Protestant theology, 304 ; theories of the origin of, 306, chap. xii. *passim* ; the necessity of knowledge in, 309 ; ethical, depreciation of knowledge in, 310 ; future of, 335, 464-500 ; and moral obedience, 396 ff. ; ceremonial, 399 ; Tiele on the evolution of, 443 ; results of inquiry into, 457 ff. ; the truth of, chap. xiii. *passim* ; unity of its history, 461 ff. ; permanence of, 464 ; truth of, senses in which affirmed, 472 ff. ; presumption from analogy, 473 ; utility of, 473-4 ; self-evidencing character of, 481 ff. ; present-day types of, 497.
Revelation, nature of, 174, 450 ff. ; evidences of, 485 ff.
Ribot, 87, 89.
Ritschl, strictures on, 300 ; theology of, 331.
Rivers, 75-7, 115, 125.
Roman Catholicism, notes of the Church, 97 ; content of salvation, 216 ; modernism in, 330 ; view of the elements, 342 ; doctrine of salvation, 386 ; its modification of the doctrine of justification, 415 ; faith and works, 417 ; moralising influence of, 417 ff. ; conditions of salvation, 415-18 ; rationalising aspect of, 415 ; doctrine of the sacraments, 423.
Rousseau, on prayer, 253.
Rutherford, Samuel, his mystical experience, 295.

SACRAMENTS, the, 395, 403, 406, 420 ff.
Sacrifice, as a means of ingratiation, 394 ; as a form of prayer, 400 ; strictures on, 400 ff. ; its place in Christianity, 420.
Saintliness, 52 ff.
Saints, intellectual life of the, 173 ; testimony of their lives, 496.
Salvation, theories of its content, 194 ; mundane theory of, 195 ; fugitive theory of, 199 ; plenary theory of, 207 ; Mohammed's view of a national, 212 ; its content in New Testament teaching, 214 ; a collective, 217 ; distinctive and persistent element in religion, 259 ; knowledge a condition of, 309 ; faith a condition of, in Christianity, 313, 408 ; the Reformers' teaching about, 315, 386 ; the way of, chap. xi. *passim* ; coercion as a way of, 387 ff. ; ingratiation as a way of, 393 ff. ; moral obedience as a way of, 396 ff. ; faith as a way of, 406 ff. ; rational valuation of, 496 ff.
Scandinavian mythology, 348, 352, 392.
Scepticism, of David Hume, 3, 4.
Schleiermacher, the method of, 33 ; on religious feeling, 39, 262 ; his depreciation of the theoretical side of religion, 262, 466.

Scholasticism, 326-7, 329, 333.
Schopenhauer, on the absolute, 358.
Self, Plato's view of the, 118; St. Paul's view of the, 118; James' analysis of the, 119; disintegration of the, 121.
Seneca, 252.
Shakespeare, 388.
Shand, on the psychology of love, 264-5; on disinterested sentiments, 268-9.
Sin, attitude of the different religions to, 207; O.T. view of its heinousness, 208 ff.; N.T. view, 212 ff.
Söderblom, on the Melanesian *mana*, 351.
Sophocles, 17, 235.
Sorley, Professor W. R., 11, 192.
Soteriology, subjective, 33, 34; controversies on, 382.
Spencer, Herbert, 370, 430.
Spinoza, his definition of love of God, 264, 286.
Spiritualistic phenomena, attitude of the great religions to, 147.
Starbuck, his investigations in religious psychology, 33, 45, 46, 70.
Steven, Dr. G., 37.
Stoicism, 251-2, 258, 353.
Stout, Professor G. F., on instinct, 106; on belief, 158.
Subconscious, the, chap. iv. *passim*; Freud on, 124, 126-7; Mr. Bertrand Russell on, 125; Coué's system, 128-30.
*Summum Bonum*, religion as a means to, 221, 471; the Christian, 326.
Symbolo-Fideism, French school of, 330.

TACITUS, on the religion of the ancient Germans, 197.
Tauler, an example of self-abandonment to the will of God, 242.
Taylor, Professor A. E., 482, 496.
—— Jeremy, 263, 292.
Tennyson, 438.
Tertullian, 404.
Theism, 11, 12; the method of philosophical, 14; its doctrine, 367-8, 377-80; rational tests of, 492.
Theology, natural, 13, 16; systematic, 22; its task, 338; modern, 410.
Theresa, St., her vision of Christ, 178; her mystical experiences, 294: on degrees of prayer, 296; on human affection, 299.
Tiele, on the origin of religion, 306; on the practical intention of, 307; on the laws of religious development, 444 ff.
Totemism, the purpose of its rites, 196; its view of life, 345; sacrifice under, 391; prior to Animism, 431; Jevons on, 432.
Transcendence and immanence, explanations of subconscious phenomena, 130 ff.
Transmigration of souls, 200, 397.
Trinity, doctrine of the, 188, 379, 467.
Troeltsch, 246.
Truth of religion, different senses in which affirmed, 472 ff.; and goodness, 487.
Turretin, on the fundamental doctrines, 316; his gnosticism, 329.
Tylor, on the objects of religious faith, 338; on ancestor-worship, 362; on Animism as the earliest religion, 430.

UPANISHADS, the, 320, 386, 400.

VEDAS, the, 196, 199, 204, 234, 383, 352, 353, 395.
Voltaire, on prayer, 253.

WARNECK, on animistic heathendom, 195.
Webb, Professor Clement, 375.
Wesley, John, 280.
Woman, her place in early religions, 347-8.
Wundt, 62.

ZEUS, 235, 260, 405.
Zoroaster, 366.

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